



*the musical heritage
of pakistan*

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The Musical Heritage of Pakistan
by
Saeed Malik

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

the musical heritage of pakistan

M. Saeed Malik



IDARA SAQAFAT-E-PAKISTAN
Islamabad, Pakistan

TO MY FATHER

Late Malik Muhammad Hussain Khan
who, too, was an ardent music lover

*"Let me repeat; music's greatest and noblest privilege is to tune the
mind's moods without requiring ordinary outside means"*

(Goethe)

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FOREWORD

The advent of fifteenth century *Hegira* has kindled among the Muslim nations and the Islamic peoples an urge to recollect their contribution to human civilization. Thus it is with delight and some justifiable pride that we are busy in recapitulating the Islamic heritage in many fields of human endeavour. The Muslim nation now has grown to 900 millions scattered all over the globe. In about fifty countries they hold positions of eminence and governance. The story of the bending of indigenous arts and traits to the creative will of Islam is necessarily different in each country.

This book on the musical heritage of Pakistan is really a report of the services rendered by Muslim kings, rulers, patrons and practitioners to the music of the sub continent. It is of course well known that before the advent of Muslims, music in the sub-continent served high priests in temples. What could be more enigmatic and ironic that an aesthetic experience which enervates our very being should be the preserves of only a few and relegated to worship rituals? Characteristically, the Muslims liberated music from this rigour and gave it a wider range and new vitality. What is the classical music of the South Asian continent is entirely the gift of the Muslims. This point needs to be stated with emphasis in view of the mischief afoot to denigrate the contribution of the Muslims to this genre of art.

One of the many forms this perverse action has taken is to assign musical notations and innovations to non-Muslims. In this prevailing atmosphere Mr. Saeed Malik's book, well

illustrated from original texts, is in reality an attempt to set the record straight.

We offer this publication to increase awareness and appreciation of our musical heritage. Perhaps, as a result of its publication, musical concerts in Pakistan could win far greater respect than is now accorded to them. We also hope that the theme (of this book) would be enlarged and expanded by further research.

Agha Nasir
Director General

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INTRODUCTION

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MUSIC HAS always been (and continues to be) my first love even though for quite some time in my early life I could not devote as much attention to it as I should have as a result of the pressures of mundane considerations and the consequential exigencies of daily routine. In my teens I used to dream of becoming a popular singer like K. L. Saigol or Muhammad Rafi, both of whom I adored, but as a mature person, my fantasies were tickled by the tantalizing melodies of Ustad Bade Ghulam Ali Khan, one of the greatest vocalists of the Twentieth Century, which used to cast hypnotic spells on me despite my lack of adequate knowledge of classical music then. His captivating renditions of 'Kheyal' and 'thumries'; his swinging flights, graces and glides; and his command over tonal modulations, were indescribably superb. Later in life, I had the honour and privilege of enjoying his company and music for several years whether it was at Asif Jah's tomb across the Ravi, or near the Hazuri Bagh Gate of the Lahore Fort, or at private 'mehfils' inside Mochi Gate.

To respond to music is inherent in human nature but to listen to it with complete understanding and undivided attention is an art in itself. We all listen to music in the first instance in the same way, because it attracts all of us on the primordial level of sheer rhythmic and sonic appeal. However, it does not uniformly affect all the listeners. To some it becomes a source of immense pleasure, thrill and ecstasy causing feelings of serene exaltations; to others it may simply mean pleasing sounds providing a few moments of emotional stimulus, a cathartic trance or savoury feelings. For still others, it may mean nothing more than inane vibrational disturbances.

Upto my high school matriculation I could not properly nurture my taste for music as I did not possess the means to satiate my appetite for music. Limitations of a poor family to which I belonged prompted me to look for a job at the young age of 17 after my matriculation in 1946. A minor job with the Government of the undivided Punjab, however, enabled me to bear some expenses necessary for the fulfillment of my musical aspirations. Predictably, it proved too meagre a salary to allow the acquisition of the services of a competent 'Ustad' or even to purchase a good musical instrument. All that I could do under those circumstances was to purchase a harmonium which I began practising on my own. As good luck would have it, I got an access to the Music Section of the Punjab Public Library, Lahore, from where I used to borrow books on music, including the unmatched 'Maarful Naghmat'. At the same time, I made acquaintances (which later developed into deep and abiding friendship) with a number of musically articulate 'atayees' (in musical parlance, non-professional musicians are called 'atayees') whose opulence and resourcefulness greatly helped them in pursuing their musical objectives. They enjoyed facilities to do their daily 'riyaz' (practice) and they could visit others' 'baithaks' often for musical exchanges.

Among those who helped in the cultivation and polishing of my taste for music were the late Yusuf Piracha, a shawl merchant of the old city of Lahore who was a good singer; the late Sheikh Qamaruddin, proprietor, Colour Printing Press, outside Mochi Gate, a man devoted to the cause of classical music; the late Master Qamaruddin, an atayee tabla player of Gujjar Gali inside Mochi Gate; the late G. A. Farooq, a WAPDA Accounts Officer and a vocalist of great merit; and Mr. Habib Ghauri, a pupil of late Sitartist Fateh Ali Khan, who spent quite some time at Bombay playing in movie orchestras. The late Master Qamaruddin unfolded for me the mysteries of different and intricate rhythmic patterns — an understanding without which it is not possible to learn and enjoy classical music. He was a mature rhythm-keeper

whose sense of timing was perfect and whose two sons were also musicians of considerable merit. My association with Sheikh Qamaruddin especially proved productive. Being a senior, he knew many more professional musicians than I did. And he was a man of means, too. There always used to be a host of musicians around him who would occasionally perform at his 'baithak' — an improvisation in the balcony of his printing works where he and I used to practice daily for long hours with great gusto. It was there that I met and heard a number of prominent vocalists and instrumentalists, and also had the privilege of accompanying many among them on the harmonium — a great honour indeed for a young non-professional musician.

Music is a science as well as an art. It incorporates pleasing, expressive and intelligible combinations of vocal or instrumental tones into a composition which has definite structure and continuity. It has often been compared with language and the comparison is quite legitimate, for it also aims to communicate meanings. It, too, has its own grammar and syntax. Because it is an expressive and communicative agency, music is primarily used as a medium to convey feelings of love, joy, devotion, admiration, etc. Through his music, therefore, a composer, a singer or an instrumentalist ventures to share his emotional experiences with his audience. The success of his attempt at communication, however, depends largely on the kind of rapport he is able to establish with his audience and the receptivity of his listeners' minds, and their interest in and acquaintance with his repertoire of music.

When we say that such and such person is a good listener we mean to compliment him for his ability to listen passively and to penetrate our thoughts, draw us out and make us want to continue. But not many individuals are capable of mastering the art of listening as can be evidenced by the fact that so few among us earn such approbation. This is analogous to a musical situation. It is simply not enough for someone to find a seat for himself at some vantage point in

a musical concert hall and at the same time let his thoughts sucked into the ever-proliferating and vaxatious maelstrom of daily circumstance. In order to enjoy music fully one needs to focus his entire attention on the sounds as they come floating through the air.

The art of listening and enjoying classical music can be acquired and perfected through proper initiation and practice under expert guidance. Yet, paradoxical as it may sound, the present time is not congenial to acquiring such a skill easily, a phenomenon for which modernization and a perpetual revolution in the field of electronics are to share the blame. Surreptitiously and subtly, the electronics revolution has brought about a profound change in the cultural patterns of our lives resulting in the creation of obstacles in the process of maintaining abrasive contacts with live music.

A city of *baithaks* as it used to be once, Lahore provided me with ample opportunities to develop my taste for good classical music as I used to often visit most of these 'baithaks' to enjoy good music. Memories of music concerts held at those 'baithaks' during the mid-forties and through the fifties are still vividly alive in my mind. But gone are the days when we had in our midst ardent connoisseurs and great vocalists who contributed so much towards the cultural life of the city, and whose 'baithaks' (located in different parts of the old city) served as 'mini concert halls' where one could get himself initiated into the art of perceptive listening in an atmosphere of respectful informality.

It was my 'riyaz' of several years at the 'baithak' of Sheikh Qamaruddin which enabled me to culture my voice to such an extent that it became easier for me to learn many 'asthais' and 'antaras' (musical compositions) of so many different and difficult ragas. It became also easy for me to imitate an accomplished singer. My voice was quite good and I was quick in comprehending difficult and intricate formulations. Side by side, I studied 'Maarful Naghmat', that wonderful book written by the late Thakur Nawab Ali. I can say without fear of contradiction that this book can

always serve as a faithful guide to all educated and enlightened aspirants who wish to learn the theory and history of the sub-continental classical music. However, I hasten to add that it can hardly become a substitute for the living presence of an 'Ustad', whose rigorous training alone can turn a budding musician into a mature and seasoned artiste. It is a comprehensive treatise on music, well worded, not pedantic in style, and therefore quite intelligible to an average music lover. Although (and quite ironically) many professional musicians do not approve of studying music with the help of this book yet too often they themselves consult it when they have to verify the veracity of a raga. Also, one has to have some prior initiation into music in order to fully comprehend the musical jargon used by the author of the book.

If I had not opted for a career, and if I had not gone in for higher education as a private student, I could have become a passable vocalist with years of practice and a sound knowledge of the theory of music which I had acquired. My long association with musicians afforded me ample opportunities to visit the 'baithaks' of several well-known vocalists like the late Barkat Ali Khan, the late Mubarak Ali Khan, the late G. A. Farooq, and several others. I also used to visit the late Sardar Khan Sahib Delhiwale, a grandson of the famous Tan Ras. Khan, from whose expertise and musical wisdom I benefitted tremendously. At Takia Meerasian outside Mochi Gate, which used to serve as a hatchery of musicians during good old days, I had the privilege of enjoying the music of many great artistes, including those whose reputation pervaded the entire Sub-Continent. They visited Lahore to sing at Takia Meerasian in order to establish their credentials as musicians of great merit.

As the atmosphere at my home was not at all congenial for musical expressions, primarily because of lack of privacy, I was compelled to fall back upon the resources of my friends who would kindly allow me to practice at their premises. By keeping company of some elderly musicians and having benefitted from their expertise, I developed a strong urge to

write about music. An acute dearth of good musical literature gave further impetus to my resolve. Furthermore, professional musicians, by and large, do not impart training and musical knowledge to even sedulous non-professionals for several reasons. They are afraid that their educated pupils would quickly 'empty' their repertoire and will perhaps excel them, at least in learning the theory of classical music. Recent musical history is replete with such examples — Rafique Ghazarvi, Feroze Nizami, Khurshid Anwar are some names which need a mention here. Secondly, they make unbearable demands which are often beyond the reach and capabilities of an average middle class educated person. Moreover, some of these professional musicians are highly self-opinionated and quite persistent in nurturing some quixotic notions about music and the incredible 'feats' of their ancestors, a syndrome which works as a break in their further advancement in musical knowledge. Thirdly, and more importantly, a majority among the professional musicians are either illiterate or semi-educated. They do not know much about the theoretical and evolutionary aspects of music. Whatever little they know in this regard, they are unable to rationalize or relate to practical manifestations of music. Knowing something is quite different from passing that knowledge on to others. Even a few who are conversant with the theory of music, because of a lack of proper methodology and a skill to articulate, cannot communicate it to others despite their desire to do so.

Perhaps professional musicians have some justifications for their reluctance and close-to-the-chest attitude towards the non-professional musicians. These are discussed at an appropriate place in this compilation of my articles on music, which were originally published in the Pakistan Times, Lahore, from January 1981 through September 1982. Since I have gone through these ordeals and have learnt, whatever little I know about music, by traversing a long and onerous path, plodding and fumbling in the way, my predicaments became the principal motivator which prompted me to

numerate write and discuss such difficulties. The pages which follow this introduction contain essays on the history, evolution and development of classical music in the South Asian Continent, and the contributions made towards its perfection by Muslim musicians, musicologists and scholars during the past 800 years or so. It should be taken as a brief historical overview of the evolutionary advancement of classical music and I hope readers will find it interesting. I also hope to be able to write more in the near future which will deal with the nitty-gritty of a system of learning music. It will also dwell on the technical aspect of music, so to say.

To many persons, music is not only an art and science but a craft as well. Music as a craft, they argue, is a complex of skills, methods and techniques based on thought and experience. It can be described by giving practical demonstration and it can be taught. The craft of music can be passed on, by those who have practiced and studied it and who understand it, to others who possess the capacity and a deep-rooted wish to learn.

To a number of people it is questionable whether the art of music, though it may be stimulated or enhanced, can be taught. Musical expression, in their opinion, can be nurtured by perception, by taste, by intuitive awareness and by intensely personal impulse that perhaps cannot be fully described.

As a science, music has its own immutable laws, mathematically correct and precise formulae such as combinations and permutations. The positions of semitones and tones have been fixed in strict accordance with the law of physics.

Everyone says that this is a critical moment in the history of classical music in Pakistan. The gulf between a classical musician, especially a vocalist, and his audience has not only grown wider than ever, it has become almost an ocean. More distressing is the fact that it has frozen and there are no immediate signs of either narrowing or thawing.

To reduce an historical overview of the development of music in one short volume represented a sizeable problem of

planning and editing, particularly in the light of a mountain of materials that I had gathered over the years. However, it seemed to me that it was worth trying. The time spent in researching, editing, and writing this volume has been rewarding. A Greek writer of yore has urged the historians to "be fearless, incorruptible and free; outspoken and a friend of truth...uninfluenced by likes and dislikes, a fair and impartial judge who will never give one side more than its due."

Lahore,
October, 1982

M. Saeed Malik

THE ORIGIN AND USE OF MUSIC

The beginnings of music are lost in the mists of the past which scholars have yet to clear. Though it cannot be ascertained as to how the original music of the pre-historic man actually sounded nor is it easy to trace the origin of music both in logical and chronological terms, it can be safely assumed that music came into existence shortly after the origin and identifiable individuality of man.

Dr. Curt Sachs, the world-renowned scholar and musicologist, in his recent fascinating study while speculating about the origin of music, has made the following apt observation:

“Music, immaterial and transitory, was scarcely ever recorded in antiquity, and even the handful of notations preserved give hardly an adequate idea of its living sound ...The music of the ancient world has faded away”¹

However, some historical sources can perhaps help us in hazarding an educated guess about the antiquity of music. Old Egyptian tomb paintings, for example, show musicians playing various instruments, and certain available records indicate that music was developed as early as 3,000 B.C. in China. How that ancient music sounded, however, is anybody's guess.

It can also be substantiated by historical evidence that among the Greeks the theory of music was highly developed. In the 6th century B.C., the Pythagoras accurately determined the numerical relationship between strings that produced tones of different pitches. The Greeks selected and arranged the tones in scales called modes. Two of these Greek modes supplied the foundation for the music of the West. Choruses played an integral part in ancient Greek dramas, sometime singing sometimes speaking. Poet-musicians competed at religious festivals. Amateur players would

accompany their poems on the lyre, and virtuosos would use the cithra, a similar instrument with more strings.

Whatever its nature, music has always contained certain basic elements: rhythm, melody, harmony and form. While rhythm and melody are the oldest elements, harmony and different forms of music are developments of recent times, historically speaking. However, good music must have unity, to satisfy a listener's ear, and variety, to keep him interested.

A reference to the highly developed form of music is found in the dialogues of Plato, Enumerating the usefulness of music, he had said:

"Through music the soul learns harmony and rhythm, and even a disposition to justice, for can he who is harmoniously constituted ever be unjust? Is not this, Glaucon, why musical training is so powerful, because rhythm and harmony find their way into the secret places of the soul, learning graces in their movements and making the soul graceful".

In an attempt to trace the history of the evolution of music, Dr. Sachs has further observed:

"It is an exciting story how music has for thousands of years been held in balance between the basic facts that, on the one hand, sound is vibration of matter ruled by mathematical ratios and that, on the other hand, musical art works are immaterial, indeed, irrational. And a still greater fascination is to see in how many different ways the two counterpoises have been kept equal, and how, with all these differences, races living far apart went similar ways and met in strange unwitting terms".²

Several myths and fables have been put into circulation since time immemorial about the origin of music. According to one, "gods and heroes had invented music in a supreme act of creation".³ This had failed to sustain rational scrutiny.

On the other hand, and despite their best efforts, philosophers, scholars, and scientists have failed to present one commonly-acceptable proposition. Some of them have suggested that imitation of animals by man set into motion a

process which provided a sound basis for the evolution of music. Others related music to mating and alluring the opposite sex. However, the proponents of this theory were contradicted by those who proved that mating played an insignificant role in mankind's early musical expressions. Another clan of scholars asserted that man used music as a means of facilitating teamwork among the most primitive tribes which critics easily rebutted by averring that pre-historic man was simply unfamiliar with such rhythmical teamwork.

A third and somewhat plausible theory enunciates that music is the direct outcome of an evolutionary process of a spoken language and that it (music) was nothing but an intensified speech. Philosophers such as Jean Jacques Rousseau and Herbert Spencer, who were supported by others, were the frontline proponents of this theory. Musicians, from the Italian Masters in 1600 A.D. to the twentieth century composers in Europe, have clung to this theory with an undiminished enthusiasm.

Music, which is the science and/or art of incorporating pleasing, expressive or intelligible combinations of vocal or instrumental tones into a composition having definite structure and a continuity, however, defies any attempt at unearthing its origin. It is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to find a simple clue to its beginning. Many say that it has already been lost in historical oblivion.

"The theories propounded by the philosophers and scholars failed because they started from two erroneous presuppositions. In the first place, they took for granted that so complicated a thing as music had grown from one root, which of itself is more than improbable. It is strange and almost unintelligible that men used to scientific methods rested satisfied with guessing and speculating where music was concerned", opines Dr. Sachs while dismissing these theories as unacceptable.⁴

"Since witnessing the very origin of music is denied to us", continues Dr. Sachs "we must turn to its earliest observ-

able stage. No prejudice or plausibility will do in seeking it out - the only working hypothesis admissible is that the earliest music must be found among the most primitive peoples, in contradistinction to their languages, which have been lost and replaced by the more highly developed languages of civilized neighbours".⁴

During man's long history, music has been sung and played in countless different ways. Among primitive peoples, drums were used to add to the excitement of rituals and to send messages. In more civilized societies, each culture has produced music by developing its own style of singing and its own instruments.

Different kinds of musical sounds or beats of drums were used by pre-historic man as a medium of expression or communication. Perhaps, even before he learned to speak a language, it was this kind of music that served man's needs. Even in the present-day world, certain aboriginal tribes in Australia and Africa use different kinds of whistles or drum-beats for conveying a variety of messages to the inhabitants of the next village or post.

In many a religion of the world, music still plays a dominant part in the discharge of religious obligations to God. Organs, gongs, bells and other instruments are all meant to attract the faithfuls to their places of worship, and sometimes, accompanied by singing, to help express their religious feelings, or to bring about catharsis.

Martial music has been in the past and continues to be used when nations or tribes go to war. It excites the listeners' passions and inculcates in them a sense of pride and patriotism which motivates them to fight for their motherland or for a cause.

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1. The Rise of Music in the Ancient World, East and West
by Curtis Sachs
 2. *ibid*
 3. *ibid*
 4. *ibid*
 5. *ibid*

Sama Veda, the Veda of melodies, and two others, Yajur Veda and Atharva Veda)

Another oft-repeated claim is that "in the *Natyasastra*, or the Science of Dramaturgy, the sage Bharata gives a clear and detailed account of the 'swaras' - musical notes; of the 'srutis' - the microtonal intervals between the successive degrees of the scale; of the two 'gramas' - the parent scales, and of the 'murchannas' - scales obtained by transposition".¹ Yet it is also conceded by many that the style of music Bharata mentioned in his treatise is not practised now because of the fundamental changes that took place in its structure and theory. There is no denying the fact that by the time Islam came to the India and Pakistan, the old music as enunciated by Bharata had undergone substantial changes.

It is futile to speculate about the origin of music. As an art, it is of immense antiquity, being as old as any product of human culture. During man's long history, music has been practised in countless ways.

All available evidence shows that the earliest music in all countries was, like the Sub-continental, modal. Out of every parent scale, modes were obtained by taking each degree of the scale in turn as the tonic or predominant note; thus every scale had as many forms as it possessed notes, each making its own appeal to the emotion. Even transilient scales had their modal variations. Whatever its nature, music has always contained certain elements such as rhythm, melody, harmony and form.

Many an anthropologist has opined that music was the forerunner of language. It is also claimed that 'deep down in the roots of the human conscious, music holds a key position in regulating orderly expression of the primeval emotional forces'.²

Radical Change

It sounds a bit trite to mention the oft-repeated Muslim contributions to the development of Sub-Continental classical music during the past 800 years or so which resulted in

the evolution of several new forms such as 'Tarana', 'Kheyal', 'Thumri', 'Tappa', 'Dadra', 'Kafi' and 'Ghazal'. But one aspect of this wholesome contribution, which has not been adequately explained and fully appreciated, is the classification of melodies (ragas) in accordance with the universally accepted system of tones and semitones, or the Persian 'Muqaam' System, which stands the test of the theory of consonance. This single Muslim contribution brought about a change which completely revolutionised the ancient Hindu system of 'gram Murchanna'. As a consequence, not only did the ancient Indian system of music gradually become extinct, but also the new one made the theory and practice compatible with each other.

The theory of ancient Indian music was based on the 'sruti' system. The 'sruti' is the smallest perceptible difference of pitch and the octave was conceived as the sum of 22 such intervals.

In this regard a reference needs to be made to Natyastra of Bharata which has been dated variously from the third century B.C. to the fifth century A.D. Before that treatise on music and theatrical arts, there was no mention of 'srutis' and their designated positions with the scale. He was the first to classify the scale on the basis of these 'srutis' in order to give a scientific rationale to the notes of 'Shadjagrama' which had been derived from the Sama Veda. These notes and the 'Shadjagrama' scale were called 'shudha', meaning pure, sacred or holy.

Originally, notes derived from the Sama Veda, (which is believed by many to be the original source of Indian music) were used in the sequence of tone, semi-tone and minortone in a descending order, and were called Udaat, Anudaat, and Svarit. 'Prabandhas' and 'Ashlokas' from the Sama Veda were sung in these notes in the same order. Unending repetition of the three notes — Ma, Ga and Re, the fourth, third and second — in a descending order might have created some sort of hypnotic effect on the chanters but it could not create good music. Gradually, more notes were added to

those original three and a scale of seven notes was thus created which always began with the note Ma (present fourth). The scale so created was always used in its descending order i.e., Ma, Ga, Re, Sa, Ni, Dha, Pa.

N. A. Jairazbhoy has succinctly explained the ancient system of classification of music as follows:

“The ancient melodic system was based on modes (jatis), each with its characteristic feature, which were constructed on heptatonic series of notes (murchannas) beginning on the successive degree of the two parent scales, Shadjagrama and Madhyamagrama. These scales were composed of intervals of three different sizes, comparable in some respects to the major whole tone, minor whole tone and semitone of Just Intonation, which were expressed very approximately in terms of their highest common factor — about a quarter tone — called ‘sruti’. The musical intervals in the two parent scales are described as being of four, three and two ‘srutis’, and since there were in both parent scales three of the large intervals and two each of the medium and small intervals, the octave comprised a total of 22 srutis. An interval of one ‘sruti’ was not considered musically satisfactory. The only difference between the parent scales was in the location of one single note which was one ‘sruti’ flatter in the second scale. In this period the ‘sruti’ was a functional element, since it was the only distinguishing feature between the two parent scales”³

Muslim musicians and musicologists in the course of time reconstituted the ‘Shadjagrama’ by removing the minortones from the scale, and based it only on two kinds of notes, the tones and the semitones. However, in the process, they had to refix the position of Re (second) and Dha (sixth) by allotting two additional srutis each to these two notes to make them as full tones. Addition of two srutis increased the total number of srutis to 24 and the division of the scale into 12 equal parts. This is the system which is used all over

the world presently.

The reclassification of melodies according to the new system, which was known as the Persian Muqaam System, was initiated by Amir Khusrau (13th century) and was completed by others after him. What were the main reasons which necessitated the reclassification of the prevailing melodies?

The high-class Brahmins who performed religious rituals in the temples refused to allow Shudras and other low castes to enter the temples to listen to religious music. This was quite in line with the prevailing caste system. They also refused to make a demonstration of their music, which was based on 'sacred' Gram Murchannas, before the idol shatterers (the Muslims) because they believed that in doing so they would commit an act of blasphemy against their religion.

The low-cast Hindus, who were refused entry into the temples and who were denied the services of high-caste Brahmins, meanwhile devised means to satisfy their devotional urges and liturgical needs. The folk music which they consequently created outside the temples was different from the temple music because of the use of 'antar gandhar' and the 'kakli nikhad', the two notes which were not used in the original Shudha scale derived from the Same Veda. These notes were pretty close to the present third and seventh notes. These folk melodies subsequently caught the fancy of the Muslim sufis, who found them very much akin to Persian and Arab music.

Popular Music

Since most people were non-Brahmin, the music evolved by them became popular among the masses and offered a sort of competition to the music of the temples, whose use was restricted to a small minority. With the appearance of the Muslim sufis on the Indian scene and their use of the prevailing folk music, the process of alienation of temple music further accelerated.

Chishti sufis of early Muslim rule, who were not opposed to music as a means of divine communication, easily attracted local attention within Muslim-conquered territories and beyond. (Many sufis started their work in India much before the Muslim armies marched into the Sub-Continent). As most Hindu worship was based on music and low caste Hindus were denied entrance into temples, the sufis used this medium in their proselytising efforts. The masses in those days, because of the Brahminic bigotry, had become sick of the prevailing social, religious and economic order. Among other factors which facilitated the work of these sufis was the idolatrous attitude of the Brahmins towards the past. It was this dogmatic faith in the inerrancy of high-class Brahmins that created a revolt in the minds of the people.

Side by side, the sufis learnt local languages, dialects and melodies to communicate with the masses effectively. They transplanted their mystic songs on local tunes and used local diction to make them more intelligible. Thus, their shrines attracted large crowds of people who desired solace and respite from the oppressive social order. Since these sufis were already accustomed to Persian and Arab music, They needed and evolved a kind of music which was an amalgam of local and foreign tunes.

Conversely, and according to the prevailing practices, 'Ashlokas' from the Sama Veda in Sanskrit were to be sung only by the pure, namely, the high-class Brahmins. The masses in general were denied the use of the temple and its music which could cater to their devotional ritualistic needs of life. On the arrival of the Muslims in the Sub-Continent, the Brahmins tried not to "pollute" their music by exposing it to the idol-shatterers, an act which was considered anti-religious. They believed that the "purity" of their music would be lost if they did so.

As a result of this popycock view of the matter, they kept on concealing the "secrets" of their sacred music by not singing either before the Muslims or low-caste Hindus. In this context, it will be of interest to make a reference to

the well-known music contest in the court of Alauddin Khilji between Amir Khusrau and Naik Gopal, a musician of considerable repute hailing from the South. This will amply illustrate the narrow-mindedness and self-righteousness of the high-caste Hindus of those days.

During the contest Amir Khusrau is reported to have made an extemporaneous rendition of Indian melodies into Persian forms, and thus succeeded in establishing his virtuosity and superiority over his rival. Naik Gopal conceded the floor to the Amir by not fully presenting his music, which was based on the ancient Indian theory of gram morchannas. It is contended that he had a motive in not making a presentation. He wanted to conceal and thus protect his 'pure.' music from the innovative genius of Amir Khusrau. Like other high-caste Hindus, he too thought that singing before a Muslim audience would be an act of blasphemy. Many Hindu historians, however, opine with tongue in cheek that it was Naik Gopal who was the winner of the contest inasmuch as he succeeded in protecting the secrets of his music from the Muslim musicians.

The void created by the close-to-the-chest attitude of the singing Brahmins and their followers, and the need of the sufis to evolve a new medium of communication with the masses gave birth to the new system of classification of melodies and the blending of local tunes with Iranian and Arab music, thus starting a new synthetic experimentation which culminated in the evolution of a brand new form of music.

Much of the confusion about the controversy on the now extinct 'sruti' system was created by the Hindu musicologists of the 16th and 17th centuries who, while acknowledging the change brought about by the Muslims, still clung to the theory expounded by Bharata in Natyasastra. Most of them are on record having said that in practice the Sub-Continental music was based on the 24 melodic units; 12 equal units of semitones. Some of them even made such observations as that a difference of one 'sruti' between the notes does not affect the tonal quality of the note. This they did to justify

the existing gap between theory and practice.

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1. Hindustani Music, its Physics and Aesthetics by
G.H. Ranade (Popular Prakashan, Bombay) 1971
 2. The Rise of Music in the Ancient World, East
and West by Curtis Sachs

(W.W.Norton and Company, INC, NY.) 1943
 3. The Rags of Northern Indian Music by
N.A. Jairazbhoy (Faber and Faber, London) 1971

OUR MUSIC: Past, Present and Future—
The New Styles

The classification of prevalent melodies in accordance with the Persian 'Muqaam'. System and the introduction of Bilaval 'thath' as the new basic scale by Muslim musicians and musicologists created a congenial atmosphere for a metamorphosis in the Sub-Continental music.

Beginning with Amir Khusrau in the later part of the 13th century, this process of rejuvenation culminated in the attainment of greater glories by the Sub-Continental music during the reign of Akbar (1556-1605 A.D.). This interregnum is considered as the golden era of music when a synthesis between ancient Hindu music and the music of the ruling Muslims took place.

During this period, musicians from other countries, particularly Iran and Asia Minor, came to settle in India and were employed in 'Darbars' of Delhi Sultans and in the courts of principalities under their suzerainty. Thus, indigenous music came under new influences and changed beyond recognition.

It was during this period also that Bhairon 'thath', which did not belong to the ancient Indian modal system and which has been named variously as Hejaz, Hujaj, and Hajujimail by the Hindu musicologists, particularly from the South, was introduced by the Muslims. These influences, emanating mostly from Iran and Arabian sources, delivered a powerful blow to the reigning musical system in this region which had its roots in the ancient gram murchannas. Leading Indian musicians who came in intimate association with their counterparts from the Middle East and Asia Minor were also positively impressed. These contacts and influences played a formative role in the development of their future works of art.

So great was the impact of these influences that by the second half of the 16th century, the ancient musical system of the Natyasastra was no longer in existence and the prevailing system became very similiary to that which is in vogue now. The elusive 22 'srutis' on which the traditional scale of Natyasastra was based were no longer functional.

The introduction of Bilaval 'thath' as the basic scale, coupled with the new classification system, cleared considerably an aura of mystry which surrounded the theory and practice of Indian music. These evolutionary processes, which manifested themselves in the shape of the ragas of today, added new dynamism to the otherwise static form of ancient Indian music.. Hindu musicologists of yesteryears unhesitatingly acknowledged that many melodies from the Persian and Arab regions were imported in their system during tha period.

Consequently, Hindu religious music radically changed and a new form of devotional music, much different from the religious chants of the temples came into existence. Called Dhrupad, (which mainly dealt with devotional, martial and patriotic themes) it became the most popular form of melody. More so when the language of the compositions was changed from Sanskrit to the newly evolved Hindi or Hinduvi or Basha. It was given an additional shot-in-the-arm when in 1470 A.D. Raja Maan Singh Tomaar of Gowaliar, with the help of some distinguished Muslim musicians and scholars, revised and revived this form. (Some of his compositions are said to exist today). Dhrupad's further development owed much to the contributions of the Muslim 'Gharanas' of musicians who made significant additions and alterations both to its form and content.

The Dhrupad style of singing held complete sway in the musical domain in the Sub-Continent until the time of Shahjehan. Simultaneously with the development of Dhrupad, however, germination of the 'kheyal' form of singing — initiated, according to some historians, by Amir Khusrau and later given further impetus by Sultan Husain Shah Sharqui

(1458-1528 A.D.) — continued unabated. It was during the reign of Muhammad Shah* (Rangeela) that the court musician Naimat Khan Sadarang and his nephew Adarang, added new embellishments and ornamentations and raised it to greater heights as a result of their innovations. Before the appearance of Kheyal on the musical scene, another form of fast Dhru-pad, known as Saadra, came in vogue. While Dhru-pads were sung in 'chautal', 'rupak' tals, etc., Saadras were sung only in 'jhaptal' and in fast tempo.

With the rise of Muslim dynasties in Deccan, the new wind of change began to blow southward, especially when Mohammad Tughlaq shifted his capital from Delhi to Devgiri (Daulatabad). Many court musicians, who were part of the royal entourage, emigrated to the South and thus initiated the process of change there. The subsequent rise and fall of different dynasties did not adversely affect the progress of music. It remained substantially the same as the sense of continuity was much more pronounced than in the present-day world of rapid and bewildering changes. If the change in power structure meant anything, it was change of ruler without affecting the life and property of a vast majority.

Because of significant borrowings from Iranian and Arab sources, the growth of Medieval Indian music did not remain indigenous. The resultant modifications in its form and content were a natural corollary of these foreign influences.

The development of music and other arts in India, as was the case all over the world in the Middle Ages, was intimately connected with royal patronage. To escape the pressures of material wants, the musicians had to attach themselves either to kings or to provincial rulers, for whom they worked and by whom they were maintained and rewarded. It is equally evident that the growth of music in India in the past was inextricably linked with the generosity of its patrons and their highly-developed taste, which enabled the artistes to devote themselves wholeheartedly to their art.

Despite the perennial controversy raging among the Muslim theologians of different denominations about the permissiveness of music in Islam, many kings could not withhold their fondness for it. Consequent upon their conquest of Hindu territories and the tributes they received from Rajas and Chieftans in the form of slaves, musicians, scholars and artists, they could not keep themselves aloof from the influences of the music of those days. During their military incursions, it can be historically proved, musicians accompanied the armies to provide entertainment and patriotic fervour to kings and their troops.

Earlier Muslim kings like Ghauri, Aibak, Altmash were busy in consolidating their hold over the conquered territories but beginning with Balban (1245-1288 A.D.) music crept into the royal courts where, ultimately, musicians were employed to provide entertainment. Later, Kaikabad, the Khiljis and the Tughalaks provided further encouragement by extending their patronage on a larger scale. Other kings of the 16th century — Muzaffar Shah Gujerati, Bahadur Shah Gujerati, Islam Shah Suri, Mohammad Adil Shah, and Bahmini Sultans of Deccan — patronised music to a still larger extent.

During the reign of Sultan Mohammad Bin Taughlak (1325-1351 A.D) music was apparently patronised on a grand scale, despite his strong religious convictions. The Sultan is reported to have kept 1200 musicians in his service, besides 1200 slave musicians. Other renowned for their patronage of music were Ibrahim Shah Sharqi of Jaunpūr (1401-1440 A.D.) and Sultan Zian-ul-Abedin of Kashmir (1416-1467 A.D.)

The Mughal patronage was unprecedented and on a much grander scale. The glory of music reached its zenith during the reign of Akbar, Jehangir, Shahjehan and their successors (with the exception of Aurangzeb) who continued the royal patronage until the disintegration of the Mughal empire when it was extended by the Nawabs of Avaddh.

In addition to the legendary Mian Tan Sen, Baz Bahadur

and Meera Bai of Akbar's period, many other famous musicians made their mark on history. They were Jehangir Dad, Chattar Khan, Pervez Dad, Khurru'm Dad, Makhu and Hamzaan during Jehangir's rule, and Darang Khan, Lal Khan alias Gun Sumandur, and Bilas Khan (son of Tan Sen) who attracted the attention of Shahjehan's court.

Thus, it is an irrefutable historical fact that music flourished without any hindrance in Muslim India and a large number of Muslims adopted it as a profession. The involvement of a large number of Muslims in the evolution of music culminated in the emergence of several 'gharanas' of music which are still in existence.

of 'kheyal'. However, it is generally agreed that it was Sultan Hussain Sharqi Jaunpuri who initiated the development of this form. Later, the genius of Sadarang, a court musician of Muhammad Shah Rangeela (who was ably assisted by his nephew and son-in-law, Feroze Khan Adarang) helped in its further nourishment which gave it "a distinct form, content, richness and beauty and enabled it to stand up as a rival to 'dhrupad'"³.

An interesting episode, whose veracity is yet to be substantiated, is linked with the development of 'kheyal'. It is said that Niamat Khan Sadarang, who was a veena player to begin with, once complained to Muhammad Shah Rangeela about the pathetic royal indifference to his instrument. For some odd and inexplicable reasons, this so much annoyed Rangeela that he ordered immediate imprisonment of Sadarang. It was during this imprisonment, which gave him an opportunity to exploit his genius and inventiveness fully, that Sadarang tried his hand at 'kheyal'. He composed new ragas and 'kheyal' compositions which gained acceptance and popularity among the masses. When Rangeela heard of this development he ordered Sadarang's release and bestowed upon him a special rank and appointed him as a courtier. This new-found position enabled Sadarang to devote himself fully to the development of 'kheyal'. Many of his compositions are still sung by 'gharana' singers.

The rivalry between 'kheyal' and 'dhrupad' persisted until the beginning of the 19th century, when 'kheyal' finally gained supremacy. Dhrupad, which reigned supreme for several centuries thus yielded to 'kheyal' but not before putting up a spirited fight.

Kheyal literally means imagination. It is so named because of it being inherently imaginative in its subject-matter, interpretation and treatment. This form is not subject to rigid rules as it permits maximum improvisation within the framework of prescribed notes in a given composition. In addition to the free use of 'taans' (flights) ornamentations and embellishments such as tremors, flourishes, graces and

trills, are allowed within its scalatal structure. Giving greater freedom to musicians than they enjoyed in 'dhrupad' singing, it also treats the listeners to an absorbing variety. 'Kheyal' is "imaginative in conception, decorative in execution and romantic in appeal"⁴, and such themes as romance, devotion and heroism can be effectively communicated through this medium. This style of singing predominates the domain of classical music today and a large proportion of the modern repertoire stems from this source.

The disintegration of the Mughal empire and the political anarchy which followed, deeply affected the development of music and other cultural activities. The weakening of the Central authority and the incursions of European powers into the Sub-continent created an acute sense of insecurity among the people. The musicians, whose fortunes and prosperity depended largely upon the ascendancy of the kingdoms by whom they were employed, were no exception to the prevailing general sense of resignation. Sensing the extinction of the Mughal empire, they began to move out of Delhi. Many of them shifted to smaller independent states and principalities where they found the prevailing atmosphere more serene and suited to their temperament. They were able to secure jobs easily from the Nawabs and the Rajas, who employed them primarily for their personal pleasure.

With the British gradually consolidating their hold and slowly nibbling at Mughal territories, the Muslim domain in India further shrank, until it completely disintegrated after the unsuccessful war of independence in 1857. In between the lingering death of the Mughal empire and the complete British takeover, the Nawabs of Avvadh carried the tradition of state patronage of music until they too went the Mughal way. But they left indelible marks on the pages of the history of the Sub-Continental music before disappearing from the scene. Nawab Wajid Ali Shah can easily be singled out for his leading role in the development of music. In addition to several books, he invented new forms of music such as

'thumri' and 'dadra'. Mian Ghulam Nabi Shori invented the 'tappa' style under the patronage of the Nawab of Avvadh.

The hundreds of small states and principalities which emerged after the disintegration of the Mughal empire continued patronising music albeit within their limitations. Some of them, especially Rampur and Gowaliar, made names for their special interest in music and other arts. Most of the 'gharana' singers got themselves attached with these princely states which helped them carry on with their traditions despite the changed political and social conditions.

The political upheavals which followed the decline of their authority in India created a sense of despair among the Muslims. They found it extremely difficult to reconcile themselves to the new situation. This led to passivity, inaction, renunciation, asceticism and other concepts that formed so large a part of the life of that period. Muslim Nawabs and the rich indulged in sensuous pursuits. They employed musicians and dancing girls only to derive sensuous pleasure from the art. Knowing the intention of their employers, the musicians tried to invent new forms which could catch their fancy. Thus emerged new kinds of musical forms such as 'thumri' and 'dadra', which can be rightly classified as erotic music. The subject-matter, contents, and forms of these styles testify to this fact.

The emphasis on the developmental aspect waning, erotic nuances of music gained preponderance. Musicians gradually lost their vaunted position in society and began to be associated with dancing girls and prostitutes, who substituted Nawabs and nobles for providing the musicians with alternative employment after they were forced out of royal patronage by adverse circumstances. Thus music assumed a completely different and undesirable rôle. As a result, "a prejudice was created among the members of intelligentsia and the middle class against music and they gradually became estranged from it because it had become exclusively an art to cater to the enjoyment and pleasure of the rich and the

nobles".⁵

The British remained indifferent towards Sub-Continental music for quite some time. They could not promote even their own Western music because of the basic difference between the two systems and the resistance which the Sub-Continental music offered to foreign melodic incursions.

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1. Indian Music – Problems and Prospects by B.V.Keskar
 2. *ibid*
 3. Indian Musical Traditions – V.H.Deshpande
 4. *ibid*
 5. Indian Music – Problems and Prospects by B.V.Keskar

OUR MUSIC: Past, Present and Future—
The Ups and Downs

Sub-Continental music, which owed its overall development to the past munificence of feudal patronage and which had undoubtedly manifested erotic and sensuous nuances, especially during the fourth quarter of the 19th century by becoming the exclusive preserve of rich aristocrats and princes, received further setbacks when a large number of rulers of princely states began to emulate the British in horse-racing and several other pastimes such as ballroom dancing, dog races, etc. which smacked of Western orientation. Understandably, they did this to please their British overlords but in the process sacrificed the interest of music which they and their forefathers had patronised earlier.

Only a handful of Nawabs, Rajas and feudal families continued to extend their patronage to classical music as a tradition. The most prominent among them were the rulers of Rampur, Hyderabad, Gowaliar, Baroda, Jaipur and Patiala, who employed most of the topmost 'gharana' singers as their court musicians.

Partition in 1947, and the subsequent disappearance of all the princely states from the political map of the Sub-Continent, proved the proverbial last straw for music, and the musicians for the first time felt their existence in danger. Bereft of the patronage of princely states, many fell victim to hardships. But it does go to the credit of many 'gharana' singers that despite adverse circumstances and hardships, they tried to keep up their traditions, methods and styles, which were the hallmarks of their individually distinct aesthetic approaches to music. However, their new generation seem less interested in the profession of their forefathers because of several compulsions like a lack of patronage and proper training facilities, society's reluctance to accord

the musicians a social status enjoyed by their elders not very long ago, and a general apathy among the intelligentsia and middle classes towards classical music.

For a short period before this situation developed, a silver lining on the otherwise dark musical horizon had appeared. Classical music received worthwhile encouragement by the almost sudden emergence of theatre at the turn of the present century when musicians found alternate employments with the spurting theatrical companies. Lyrics in theatre were based predominantly on classical music and therefore offered ample opportunities to practising musicians to prove their worth, as also to keep the torch of their glorious traditions burning.

The making of full-length films, however, put a damper on theatre by providing the same powerful emotional appeal as did melodrama and by presenting spectacles far beyond the scope of theatre. Consequently, increasing number of spectators deserted the theatre for the movies. This trend was further accelerated by two new elements. In 1927, sound was added to the previously silent films, thereby removing one of the theatre's major claims to superiority. The worldwide economic depression of the early 1930s also prevented many theatre-goers from patronising this art form any further. Since people could go to the movies for a fraction of what it cost to see a play, theatre-going became a luxury for a few, especially as the depression deepened. The fact is that theatre proved too weak to face the onslaught of films and capitulated in the 30s. With the vanishing of the theatre, the peculiar brand of classical music associated with it also disappeared.

In the meantime, gramophone discs, which enabled the musicians to reach wider audience than was hitherto possible had been commercialised and were contributing significantly towards the popularity of classical (and other forms of) music. Great vocalists and 'gharana' singers like Khan Sahib Abdul Karim Khan, Ustad Fayyaz Khan, and Bade Ghulam Ali Khan have been immortalised by these gramophone discs.

After the decline of theatre, radio and films chipped in. These two institutions not only provided new job opportunities to 'gharana' musicians (although the remunerations offered to them by radio were pretty measly) but also gave them aesthetic and professional satisfaction. Like theatre, film music in the beginning was based on folk and classical traditions, especially for those films which were produced in Calcutta and Bombay. Only in Lahore, the third film centre in those days, film music had a beginning which was steeped in folk traditions only. The great composer, Master Ghulam Haider, is considered the pioneer of this type of film music. Gradually however, folk music became the basis of film music all over the Sub-Continent, which was ultimately elbowed out by the so-called pop music, either borrowed or plagiarised from Western sources. With the shift in the emphasis of film music, classical musicians once again found it extremely hard to remain attached with the new employers — the movie industry. They were slowly edged out by the force of circumstances, because it became simply impossible for them to keep the purity of form and spirit of their music intact while remaining under the employment of film-makers. Consequently, classical musicians were restricted only to one medium i.e., to rely upon the opportunities and facilities offered by radio. In the beginning, radio served their purpose admirably. It devoted a major portion of its time for classical music, vocal as well as instrumental, but with the passage of time its enthusiasm for classical music waned and it began projecting other forms of light music. 'Thumri', 'dadra', 'ghazal', 'geet', folk and film songs nibbled gradually at the time originally reserved for classical music in radio broadcasts. In line with this new trend in the supply and demand situation in 'the music market', many scions of famous 'gharan'a singers started drifting towards lighter (and erotic) forms of music.

'Thumri' and 'dadra', it is agreed by musicians and musicologists, are generally used as vehicles for the expression of amorous feelings. The word 'thumri' is derived from 'thu-

mak', which connotes a graceful stamp of the foot and points clearly to its link with dance and gasticulation. While explaining 'thumri' and 'dadra' in "The Story of Indian Music", the noted Indian musicologist O.Goswami, has said: "It (thumri) is a lilting music, amorous in its subject-matter....it has some special characteristics. It often consists of a poem, the subject-matter of which is love, dealing especially with a particular temper or mood". In thumri singing, 'chachar' and 'teental' are used. About 'dadra', which is very akin to 'thumri', Goswami stated that 'in structure and in spirit they ('thumri' and 'dadra') are almost identical. In theme, treatment and exposition also they resemble each other. The only difference lies in the 'tals' used and the absence of 'bol-making'. The 'dadra' type of music uses 'dadra tal', and hence its name".

There are several historical, sociological and psychological factors which accentuated the decline in the popularity of classical music. But the musicians must also accept a part of the blame for the deteriorating standards of music which resulted in the present sorry state of affairs. They developed a sense of acute jealousy and, like the Brahmins of yore, hesitated to make a complete rendition of their 'gharana' music lest its purity be polluted by the imitations of others. They avoided exposing their distinct styles to the innovative genius of the members of other 'gharanas'. Similarly, they did not easily accept other singers as their pupils. Consequently, this narrow-mindedness sent their precious heritage into oblivion. Conversely, many compositions of their forefathers passed on to the future generations in deliberately distorted or mutilated forms.

Unfortunately, a majority of the musicians today are handicapped by their social status and limited intellectual awareness. They are unable to preserve much less contribute towards the continued development of their musical traditions. Also, they do not care much for the history or theory of music, so vital for its further growth. This makes it extremely difficult for them to rationalise the salient features

of our classical music either before educated and searching students or the initiated laymen. This lack of theoretical knowledge on their part adversely affected the quality and growth of music.

Partly because of these reasons, the masses in general and the educated middle class in particular, developed apathy or aversion towards classical music. They began to look down upon it as frivolous. Many even branded it immoral. But despite shabby treatment, music continues to be the main source of entertainment for the masses and the middle class.

To face these formidable challenges and save this art from dying a slow and lingering death, our musicians need the help of all segments of society. First, there should be a basic change in our social attitudes and respectability should be restored to music. Words of cheers alone cannot dissuade musicians from deserting this profession which they are doing in large numbers.

- (b) our double standards towards music and musicians. We wish to derive maximum pleasure from their music but at the same time do not give them a special status commensurate with their high position in musical hierarchy;
- (c) reluctance on the part of musicians to invest their time and energies any more to achieve a degree of perfection without first being assured of appropriate mundane returns;
- (d) a lack of emphasis on the part of classical vocalists on voice culture, and their frequent postures of waggery during performances;
- (e) the rivalry among adherents of different 'gharanas';
- (f) the undesirable trends and the inroads made by pop music through films, radio and television;
- (g) a general lack of appreciation of classical music among the listeners;
- (h) the captivating influences of Western orchestration and our inclination to incorporate the pleasing sounds of ever-increasing number of electronic instruments into our system.

Groaning under the weight of many extraneous elements, and judging from several points of view, our classical music undoubtedly is at the crossroads at present. The removal of feudal patronage after Independence without an appropriate substitute raised the problem of the very existence of musicians. The impact of films, radio and now TV, has brought in new considerations and forced the musicians to cater to popular taste and yet, difficult as it is, preserve the purity of the classical tradition.

Under these circumstances, is it possible to check the downhill journey of classical music and revitalise it? Are we prepared to accord music once again its rightful position in the hierarchy of fine arts? These and other important questions related to the preservation and development of our classical tradition should be examined carefully and given immediate and undivided attention.

We can hardly afford to overlook the fact that there is a general preponderance of pop music, heavily loaded with strong influences of Western music and orchestration, in our films, radio and TV these days. Ghazal singing and folk songs trail behind, whereas classical music has been relegated to the background despite the fact that all other varieties (except folk) draw heavily on its treasure house for some of their best effects and impact. A good composer or a singer is simply unable to give his very best without sound knowledge and good grooming in classical music. And yet, paradoxically enough, our attitudes towards this form of music has been, and continues to be, callously indifferent.

It is apparent that in the course of time the followers of various 'gharana' traditions became isolated from their everdiminishing audiences. They seem to have built around them, artificial "protective walls". Every 'gharana', it would seem to many musicologists and connoisseurs, developed a kind of arrogance (and in some cases hatred) towards all music which differed from its own style, form and contents. This tendency obviously resulted from a blind anxiety of the musicians to preserve their distinctive musical style. The quibblings and bickerings (sometimes fist fights) among musicians not only affected their art adversely, but also caused further estrangement between them and the common run of people. Recently, during the course of a discussion about the gloomy future of our music, a celebrated sarangi player challenged me to produce a single musician (vocalist or instrumentalist) who could sing or play with him in "true classical style". What he meant was that no instrumentalist or vocalist other than him could make an exposition of a certain style of classical music.

Also, just recently, I was chastised by an adherent of a certain gharana (through his promoter who could articulate his thoughts in English) for my omission in mentioning his name in one of my articles which dealt with the present state of 'dhrupad' singing. According to the over-exuberant promoter of this particular vocalist, 'dhrupad' singing is now

the exclusive preserve of that particular 'gharana' and so on and so forth.

This attitude of self-righteousness and contempt for others is very damaging to the cause of music.

Many well-known classical musicians have switched or are in the process of switching over to pop and other forms of music which bring 'more money and better appreciation'. Privately, though, they confess and bemoan the fact that by so doing they are hitting at their own roots. True, changes are inevitable, but the basic structure and pattern of classical music should not be allowed to be eroded.

To preserve our glorious heritage and protect it from the unabated onslaught of pop music, we shall have to lift our classical music and its practitioners from the low social position in which they are now placed. At the same time, we should also accept without any mental reservations "the validity of music as an accepted mode of self-expression and recreation".¹ According respectability not by itself will remove all hurdles but will bring about basic change in social attitudes, so important from the point of view of the future growth of music.

To begin with, the stigma of immorality or of being of Hindu origin should be removed from the fair face of music. It has been aptly observed that "the association of questionable morals with music goes deeper and is more insidious than it appears at first. Since we think that music is bad, the suspicion we associate with it gets transferred to the practitioners"² A general reformation of music is possible only if we give it its appropriate place in our society. Also, there should be no double standards about music and musicians. An overwhelming majority of us wish to derive maximum pleasure from music and still hate to accord the musicians the high corresponding social status. This is far from reasonable.

1. B.V.Keskar, Indian Music: Problems and Prospects

2. Dr. M.Sadiq in an article The Musician: A bid for higher status published in the Pakistan Times — date not known

OUR MUSIC: Past, Present and Future—Appreciation and enjoyment

Besides several other factors, a general lack of understanding and appreciation of classical music among listeners has been responsible for the steep decline in its popularity and further progress.

Ordinarily, an overwhelming majority of listeners do not have any knowledge of the history or evolution of the Sub Continental music and its classical traditions created and so ably perfected by Muslim musicians and musicologists. They even lack a rudimentary knowledge of this fine art form. Naturally, they cannot enjoy music fully. Suitable steps should therefore be urgently taken to make music more intelligible. Music lives and flourishes on listeners and if we have knowledgeable, keen and perceptive listeners, we are bound to have great musicians among our midst.

To derive maximum pleasure from a rendition of classical music, instrumental or vocal, one needs to have "good ears" in addition to a developed taste and an alacrity in responding to it aesthetically. This cheerful readiness on the part of the listeners to respond to musical stimuli encourages the performing artist and helps him to achieve his very best. This also helps in establishing a closer personal relationship between the musicians and his audiences.

Thus, after we have achieved some tangible results in removing stigmas and taboos unjustly and inappropriately built around music, a sense of awareness and appreciation of classical music among the listeners must be created, cultivated and developed. This is a sine quo non for the creation of musical awakening so vital for the recovery and rejuvenation of this art form.

To respond to music is instinctively inherent in human nature but to listen to it with complete understanding and

delightful pleasure is an art in itself. This can only be perfected by proper initiation, long and patient listening, and expert guidance. We all listen to music in the first instance in the same way because it attracts all of us on the primordial level of sheer rhythmic and sonic appeal. The difference is only in the quantum of enjoyment. To a large number of listeners it becomes a source of immense pleasure, thrill and ecstasy; to others, it may simply mean pleasing sounds providing only a few moments of emotional stimulus. For a few others who have neither good ear for good music nor are sufficiently attracted towards it, it may be nothing more than inane vibrational disturbances.

Music has often been compared with language because of its communicational character. Like language, it too has its own grammar and syntax. Being an expressive and communicative agency, music is primarily used to convey feelings of joy, love, devotion, admiration, patriotism, etc. Thus, through his music or rendition, a composer or a singer ventures to share his emotional experience with his audience. He deliberately tries to establish rapport with his listeners, an effort in which a good musician generally succeeds admirably. But the beauty and bewitching influence of his music require that his listeners should be equipped with a fine aesthetic sense.

The success of his attempt at communication, therefore, depends largely on the receptivity of his listeners' minds, and their interest in and acquaintance with his music. The higher the type of composition the more difficult it is to understand the principles of this "language of sound". To understand music is difficult indeed, but it gives more pleasure and satisfaction to the listeners than most other arts do, only if they have at least a rudimentary knowledge of it. An uninitiated listener will not be able to make out anything from the nuances and subtleties of music, from the sophisticated arrangement of melodic phrases and from the intricacies of different rhythmic patterns.

The art of listening can be acquired and perfected

through proper initiation and practice. Yet, paradoxical as it may sound, the present age of technological advancement is not congenial for acquiring such a skill easily, a phenomenon for which modern age and the continuous revolution in electronics must be largely blamed. This revolution has brought about profound changes in our cultural patterns and social behaviour.

Just about four decades ago, for example, it was not so easy to hear a maestro perform. One had first to establish emotional and intellectual rapport with right kind of person(s) and at the right time before one could assure himself of a place at a privately arranged concert. In those days, music concerts were arranged in private 'mehfils' at the residences of affluent members of the community. Having invested the time and effort, and having developed such intimacy, one was ready to listen and enjoy a rendition by a renowned artist. (It is a pity that musicians of such high calibre are no more among us and we only remember them by name). Today, in contrast, one needs only to flick a knob and the music states oozing out of the electronic equipment. It is in this way that modern technology has disrupted those cultural habits of the people which they had developed over the ages, and has turned music into an extremely impersonal experience.

To remedy the situation and as a substitute for the 'mehfils', radio, TV and arts councils should initiate special programmes which not only promote appreciation of classical music among the listeners, viewers and students, but also recreate the personal atmosphere reminiscent of yesteryears.

It has now been recognised all over the world that vocal music is superior to instrumental music. Some musicians and musicologists in their exuberance and bias for singing have gone so far so to brand all non-vocal music as "dry instrumentalism".

It is therefore imperative that a musician who aspires to achieve mastery over music should acquire complete control over his voice, because a naturally melodious voice alone is not sufficient for the purpose of singing, although it is one of the basic requirements of good music. A cultured voice alone succeeds in exacting and titilating emotions, and in touching responsive chords in listeners.

This is a correct approach because a voice with a high

quality of tone, volume and melodiousness will produce great music. To recreate the hypnotic influence of our music, we shall have to lay great stress on the culture of musical voice. One who does not possess good voice or whose voice cannot be cultured need not enter the profession of classical vocalisation.

An ordinary listener i.e., a layman, falls back upon music for momentary pleasure to get some respite from his monotonous daily routine. But when he fails to derive the desired relief, his fondness for music naturally receives a setback. Unintelligible words of a classical composition rendered by a singer with uncultured voice completely disillusion him.

Unfortunately, words have become a mere pretext in present-day singing and we find the 'kheyal' compositions becoming wordless melodies. By over-stressing the technical and grammatical aspects of a particular raga, and by incorrectly pronouncing and incompletely rendering the lyrics of a certain piece, the vocalist fails to convey to the listeners the right kind of sentiments which are meant to be communicated through a combination of music and lyrics.

Melodiousness and correct pronunciation are therefore two of the best elements for conveying the inner meaning of a composition. But, unfortunately, majority of our classical singers lack both these qualities which are so essential for making an enduring impact on the listeners. Most of these singers either do not possess cultured voices and/or do not care much for the correct pronunciation of lyrics on which a particular musical composition is based.

This defect, which has largely been responsible for the general indifference towards and a disliking for classical music (among the masses), has assumed perennial importance. It is a very common practice among classical singers not to recite the full text of an 'asthai and antara' while making a rendition of a particular raga. Most of them deliberately avoid doing so lest they should be dispossessed of their 'gharana's' monopoly. There are quite a few among them who do not know the texts of the lyrics and are there-

fore unable to render them. In stead, they indulge in unnecessary tonal acrobatics, embellishments and graces, forgetting that music often becomes anaemic due to over-refinement, sophistication and intricate maneuvering that dulls inspiration. Thus they fail to communicate emotions or evoke aesthetic responses from the listeners. Lyrics of all 'kheyal' compositions in the beginning were based on meaningful poetry which was written in praise of God or prophets or which treated mystic and metaphysical themes.

By not reciting or being unable to recite the full texts of lyrics, the vocalists deprive the listeners of the meaning of that particular composition and thereby cause incalculable damage to the popularity of classical music because one of the essential elements of a composition becomes unintelligible, cumbersome and meaningless. Those who care to recite the texts often do so in such corrupted and distorted manner that it makes no sense at all.

To elucidate my point I would like to advert briefly to a few film songs which had had tremendous popular appeal although they were based on pure classical compositions. These songs or classical compositions created an everlasting impact on the minds of the listeners, laymen and the initiated alike.

Khurshid Anwar's masterpiece 'dil ka dia jalaya' in film "Koel", which had all the basic ingredients of the raga Jaijaivanti, and was sung by Nur Jehan, was so pleasing to the ears that it completely charmed the listeners. Similarly, a song from "Baiju Bawra" in the voice of the late Muhammad Rafi and composed by Naushad Ali, "mann tarpat hari darshan ko aaj" gained almost immediate, unreserved acclaim and popularity among the masses of the Sub-continent. Yet another good example was Sadarang's famous 'kheyal' composition in the raga Darbari, which the late Rashid Attre cast in the cultured voices of the late Zahida Parveen and Fateh Ali Khan in the film "Wahda", which also gained unprecedented popularity. Many other similar masterpieces too can be quoted to bring home this point.

An ordinary listener, who is not initiated in classical music, may rightly ask, why is it that Jaijaivanti, Malkaus and Darbari sung by Nur Jehan, Rafi, Zahid Parveen and Fateh Ali Khan respectively had so much popular appeal in contrast with a formal rendition of a raga by any other 'accomplished' classical singer? The answer is not far to seek. Those who rendered these songs not only had melodious and cultured voices but also used correct pronunciations while singing. Also, they rendered in their emotion-packed voices complete texts of the songs which had certain meanings to convey and which tickled the emotions of the listeners. They also imparted rare beauty, elasticity and dignity to these compositions. These elements are not given due consideration in 'kheyal' singing by most of our vocalists. If they begin laying stress on these important aspects of 'kheyal' singing, their presentations too will command similar acceptance and respect from the masses.

With the exception of a few top-ranking classical singers, most of our musicians, however do not possess cultured voices or do not care to develop them. Good music requires not only naturally melodious but also cultured voices. Also classical music should not be confined to the singing of musical grammar, as most of our artists do but should be a balanced mix of technicalities, aesthetics and emotions. The stress on 'Sur' (tonal quality of the voice) nevertheless is very important because it is the preponderance of the tonal element which adds musicality to the voice.

As has been very aptly said "music has an emotional appeal to man and society....A performer, unless he reacts emotionally to his music or draws some pleasure from it, cannot render it well".² If he is a 'mechanical' performer of music, he can never become a great musician.

Did you ever ask a vocalist what raga he was singing and what he was trying to say through it? Did his answer differ from the one which I am paraphrasing that he was singing, say the raga Behag, that it excluded Re and Dha in its ascent, and that 'tivera' Ma was used in its descent along with other

seven notes, and that Ga was its 'vadi' (sonant) and Ne was its 'samvadi' (consonant) and that it belonged to the Bilaval 'thath', etc. In other words, he gave you the impression that he was singing the grammar of music according to the set rules but did not have any specific idea or mood to convey. Such an approach to music, which is devoid of aesthetics and the artiste's emotional involvement, is not conducive to a widespread acceptance of this rich, variegated classical art.

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1. B.V.Keskar, Indian Music, Problems and Prospects
 2. Ibid

OUR MUSIC: Past, Present and Future— Remedial measures

In our social milieu, enjoyment of arts, particularly classical music, has often been thought a tedious, tiresome or boring task. Consequently, culture has come to mean the "finer things" of life rather than the real things, so essential to social continuity and expression.

As a natural corollary to this unrealistic attitude, music has not been as institutionally functional, or has not been so recognised as it has been in other societies and cultures. Because to many it does not appear to be an element of sociological importance, it has been grudgingly accepted as an imposition or, at best, as an ornament.

As things stand today, the future of classical music in Pakistan seems pretty bleak, and unless urgent remedial measures are adopted, it is considered doubtful whether this "supreme expression of Muslim genius in the Sub-Continent" can survive as a form of art and entertainment. There is every likelihood of its getting lost in historical oblivion if our pathetic indifference to it persists. Because of several historical, political, psychological and sociological reasons music has, for a pretty long time, been left in a state of waywardness and has been allowed to drift with the turbulent currents of passing time. Public apathy and callous official indifference, especially during the British rule, further added to the confusion in the domain of music. Classical music, therefore, is faced with a host of problems which, unless solved urgently, are bound to lead to gloomy consequences.

The initial and the foremost step to be taken is to create an awareness among the people about the disaster threatening our rich cultural heritage. This is absolutely necessary because a young nation has to seek nourishment from the past heritage while employing creative talents of the new

generation to develop a synthesis from contemporary influences. This can be augmented a great deal by according music due recognition at the highest national level. Once music and the musicians are given their appropriate places in our social set-up, an automatic and desired change in the attitudes of the masses will ensue.

Secondly, the notions that musical expressions are not permissible in an Islamic polity and that because of the past association of music with dancing girls and some other undesirable elements it had become bad ab initio should be removed from public mind. True, music had taken a sensual and erotic turn in the last century because having become a preserve of rich aristocrats and philandering princes many undesirable trends crept into its sphere. But that is not the whole story. Music had also acquired a very high status during the heydays of Muslim rule in the Sub-Continent when it was considered a very important intellectual and spiritual food. From time immemorial in all human societies music and other allied arts have enjoyed privileged positions. Their role has been and still continues to be vital in creating mental balance and buoyancy in individual as well as in society. Quite naturally, it received its rightful patronage during the Muslim rule in the Sub-Continent.

Arts councils, cultural societies and other organizations with similar aims, which are busy in the promotion and development of the arts and culture of Pakistan, can also assist in a big way in removing unjustifiable taboos and irrational stigmas by arranging lectures, seminars and panel discussions focusing on the past, present and future of our classical music. This will greatly facilitate the uninhibited growth of music. Performances by eminent musicians and vocalists and periodical competitions among budding artistes, will go a long way in filling the void created by the recent deaths of so many of our accomplished artistes. Additionally, this will create a proper and congenial atmosphere for seeking out our best artistic talent and help us catch them while they are young.

Radio and television, which are acting as agents of cultural integration, too, can contribute significantly to these efforts. Their programmes should be imaginatively designed and meticulously executed so that they educate the listeners about music as well as provide them entertainment, gradually leading to a better appreciation and a gradual, imperceptible assimilation of some salient features of music and its classical traditions. Though slow and, may be unconscious, this process of assimilation will ultimately result in creating much-needed awareness, comprehension and appreciation of music. To augment these efforts and to inculcate among the people a sense of participation, the frequency of 'audience programmes' (where the artistes perform in the presence of a sizeable number of discriminating listeners in the studios of Radio and Television) should also be increased by these two organizations. This will undoubtedly help in recreating an atmosphere of the old days when musicians used to perform in private 'mehfils' or small concert halls under congenial conditions.

As a necessary concomitant of these measures, production of easy and intelligible literature on music in Urdu (and perhaps in English too) and several regional languages should be undertaken in the right earnest. Unfortunately, very little, if any, in the way of musical literature, has been produced in Pakistan either in Urdu or in other regional languages, not to mention the acute dearth in the English language. The importance of literature in the promotion of any art can hardly be over-emphasised. Musicians who command undivided attention and respect of the people, musicologists and scholars should be encouraged and commanded to write books and articles not only to popularise music but also to educate and enlighten the masses on our rich heritage. To begin with, perhaps, the Ministry of Culture or the National Council of the Arts should take the lead by arranging for the publication of some good literature on classical music in Urdu. Later, some literature may also be produced in English which serves as a link with the outside

world so that people in foreign countries know about our rich and variegated musical heritage.

To allow the fine arts to flourish unhindered, moral and material support by national provincial and city governments is a must.

The Government and the people of culturally vibrant societies are doing a lot in patronising the fine arts in other countries. Let's take the examples of a few countries where funds from public exchequer are appropriated for musical and other cultural activities.

In countries like the United States of America, England, France and Italy, not only do the governments give grants and subsidies for the highest type of music but music and art institutions, which have created a name for themselves and which serve as models nationally and internationally, are encouraged and supported liberally by public and private sector organizations in addition to endowment of money by private citizens. In the United States of America, for example, the Metropolitan Opera of New York and the operas in the cities of Los Angeles, Boston and Chicago are kept alive by enormous grants given to them by federal, state and city governments. Scores of American municipalities, large and small alike, sponsor and maintain orchestras, some of which have acquired international fame like the 120piece Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra which visited Pakistan in the late fifties. Similarly, in the United Kingdom, the Royal College of Music, and the Royal Opera are maintained by the Crown. The case of France is not much different from these two countries. The world-renowned French institution — "Conservatoire", the famous place for the teaching of music, is looked after by the government. The French government also supports the great Opera House of Paris and theatre groups like "Comedie Francaise" from the time of Louis the Fourteenth. After the Revolution, The Republican regime not

only did not change the policy of support to these institutions but also gave them greater assistance than they were receiving from the kings and the princes. The great Italian operas and orchestras too receive wholesome grants and subsidies from the national government, municipalities and public-spirited organizations and individuals.

All these institutions have the highest status in their particular arts and are deservedly considered models on which others base their musical or operatic standards.

In Pakistan, the national air carrier, PIA, made a very bold experiment in establishing an art academy which unfortunately failed due to the alleged bickerings between the artistes and the art administrator. Whatever the consequences of this experiment, it should not have deterred the public and/or private sector to extend their patronage to classical music. It is an admitted fact that art of any kind cannot prosper without the encouragement of the people and the patronage of State, and the sooner we realize and do something about it, the better.

OUR MUSIC: Past, Present and Future—
Grooming the artistes

The training, care and nourishment of classical musicians is something with which many of us ought to be more concerned than we have been in the past, for classical musical traditions are a significant and vital part of our heritage. Their value has assumed greater importance with the passing centuries as they have developed beyond their modest beginnings to become a rich variegated and sophisticated art form which now speaks international language.

(Sub-Continental classical music evolved, nourished and perfected by Muslim musicians and musicologists is presently appreciated and enjoyed by a large number of listeners in Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, Bangladesh and even in the island country of Sri Lanka. That classical music cuts across the usual barriers of language and religion shows the complete metamorphosis which ancient Indian music underwent as a result of the impact of strong cultural currents and influences emanating from Asia Minor, Iran and the Arab Middle East during the Muslim rule in the Sub-Continent and the subsequent cross-cultural fertilisation which took place in this region).

Regretably, however, only a handful of musicians are left in Pakistan who are desperately and almost single-handedly trying to keep up something of the old traditions. Still more disturbing is the fact that their scions are slowly deserting this profession as it does not bring returns commensurate with the time and efforts they put in mastering this art. Admittedly, a musician deserves a fair financial recompense to keep his body and soul together.

Not long ago, the Director General of Pakistan National Council of the Arts declared that a grandiose scheme was in the offing for the establishment of a National Academy of

Performing Arts in Islamabad. Estimated to cost Rs. 60 lakhs the proposed Academy was said to offer diplomas and degrees in a variety of disciplines covering drama, music and dance for which no institutional support and facilities existed anywhere in the country. The aim of the Academy, according to the PNCA chief, was to train and provide artists and technicians for the expanding fields of mass media — TV, Radio, stage and films. This was a very welcome news which must have greatly pleased and encouraged the connoisseurs of music and the musicians, whose numbers, it must be admitted sadly, are dwindling rather rapidly. Except for the PIA Academy interlude, performing arts, especially music, hardly ever enjoyed any substantial support or patronage from the State. This ambitious scheme, if and when implemented, will decidedly put a halt to the sharp decline in the popularity of classical music in Pakistan.

Moreover, certain aspects of the training and grooming of future classical musicians should be discussed threadbare before the music department at the proposed Academy is set up. Classical music, which provides nourishment to all varieties of music (except folk), is admittedly not the music of the masses. It is largely confined to urban areas. Its *raison d'être* lies in its purely musical content and its quality is assessed on the basis of melody and rhythm. Therefore, any future project concerning the training of classical musicians must emphasise these two aspects.

Undoubtedly, once again the old question of whether classical music can or should be taught formally at educational institutions, arts councils and academies will arise with all its negative and positive reverberations. Many among us feel that it cannot be taught in a formal classroom atmosphere because, they think, music can be learned only from an 'ustad'. This notion has not only stood the test of time but also has established its indispensability time and again. Apart from that, one never ceases to be amazed at the tenacity with which various anachronistic attitudes and prejudices regarding classical music persist, despite overwhelming

evidence that it has undergone radical changes in the past several centuries and the notion that it is a Hindu dissipation has been completely belied by history.

Let us for a moment have a look at the Indian experience vis-a-viz the training of musicians. A number of universities and colleges have been established there, especially after Partition, which offer courses in classical music exclusively. Yet, these institutions have hardly turned out any vocalist or musician of repute. Their dismal failure to produce competent musicians stems from the fact that the time-honoured practice of intimate teacher-pupil relationship was not followed. Reportedly, these Indian institutions have now reverted back to the old system of teaching music by employing a number of eminent musicians and giving them specific assignments to train and groom only a few students within a specific period of time. These 'ustads' are not even required to attend these institutions but are allowed to hold training sessions at their own residences or any places of their choice.

In Pakistan too this method and approach should be followed if the void created by the death of prominent musicians is desired to be filled before time runs out. The sponsors of the proposed Academy should give careful consideration to this matter and keep some of the prominent musicians on its payroll who may be asked to train a few budding artistes within a stipulated time-frame. These students could be their progenies, sons or relatives, but they should be groomed to become worthy successors of their 'ustads'.

Some people have a wrong notion about music classes or schools. They think that by joining such institutions and attending their classes for a few months they can become good musicians. That is not true. All or most students in any class are not likely to become proficient in any profession, more so in music which requires some inherent gifts such as a good voice, which cannot be acquired by a student's labour. At best, a majority of the large number of students in these classes may become supporters of music i.e., good

listeners, because of the grounding they get in these schools or classes. The only useful purpose achieved from the music classes at the Arts Councils is that they promote a sense of appreciation of music among the students. The way these classes are run will never produce even a single really competent musician who could rank among the great masters.

On several occasions in the past, the Arts Councils or the Ministry of Culture, have made generous grants to the survivors of deceased musicians. The latest such example was of the presentation of a cheque for Rs. 10,000 to the family of the late sitarist Ustad Mohammad Sharif Khan Poonchwale. While these grants do go some way in mitigating the sufferings of the survivors of the deceased musicians, they do not permanently solve their problems. If such grants are made to them during their lifetime with the stipulation that they would have to produce a successor or two within a given period of time, it would result in the production and grooming of young artistes as the old musicians would be motivated enough to keep up old traditions without any pressure from the needs of life.

There is a great deal of confusion regarding the role of the performer and the teacher (ustad). A good 'ustad' need not necessarily be a good performing musician and a brilliant performer would not be generally a good teacher. Education and performance on a stage are two completely different things. A competent teacher must therefore be a well-groomed musician who is very well conversant with the theory of music, knows all the technical aspects of the art and is well up in practice. The practical distinction between both should be clearly marked and comprehended fully for the betterment of music.

Another thing which can help in the maintenance of our musical standards is to free the ageing artistes from the pressures of daily needs. Public-spirited organisations such as commercial banks, PIA, Railways, and others from the private sector which have been very helpful in the past in promoting sports, should also extend their patronage to

the musicians. They should be persuaded to provide employment to some prominent musicians. This will not be much of a burden on these organizations but it will give a tremendous boost to music. Those employed by these organizations should be required not only to train young musicians but also to present them at annual or biannual competitions organised on an all-Pakistan basis.

Holding of annual music conferences in the past was not a bad idea. These annual moots attracted prominent musicians from all over the country. Even artistes from across the borders (India and Afghanistan) participated in these functions. These get-togethers, besides providing entertainment to the public, helped budding artistes achieve maturity by performing in the presence of musical giants from all nooks and corners of Pakistan. Musical competitions, conferences and seminars highlighting talent and contributions made by artists and musicologists of yore should provide impetus to musical activities in the country, and create an awakening among the masses about the need to preserve our rich cultural heritage. The Ministry of Culture and/or the Pakistan National Council of the Arts should take upon themselves the organisation of these annual moots in the future.

Rates of compensation at Radio and TV need revision and updating, as they do not reflect the high costs of living. Performing fees for the musicians must be increased to a respectable level from their present measly amounts. The PNCA or the local Arts Councils should take this matter up with the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting which controls the affairs of Radio and TV.

Music is judged and decided by quality, training and long practice. Let us try to put it on a sound footing. If we succeed in creating a general awareness among the masses about the impending loss of our rich heritage, if we realise the difficulties by the practitioners of classical music, and if we are successful in providing respectable means of livelihood to the musicians, there is no reason why this hitherto

neglected art should not once again attain its pristine glory. Let us make a beginning, even though a modest one, before it is too late.

In writing this series of nine articles I drew upon a long essay
by B.V.Keskar on Indian Music: Problems and Prospects

MUSICAL GENRES

TARANA — Khusrau's gift to music

It is extremely difficult to assess in terms of tangibles the profound effect which the Muslim rule brought to bear upon the cultural patterns of the lives of the people of the Sub-Continent. However, there are many incontrovertible signs of the new trends and currents spawned by a long and steady process of cross cultural fertilization in this region after the acquisition of political power by the Muslims. Music, among them, is the one sphere which was almost saturated by these influences and as a result was tremendously enriched by the Muslim genius.

Of the many inputs and individuals responsible for the changes one name stands out so starkly that his singular contributions towards the development and perfection of several new forms and genres of music are accepted by most scholars without any reservations. He was Abul Hassan commonly known as Amir Khusrau (1253-1325 A.D.), whose name will always remain enshrined in the annals of music of the Sub-Continent. 'Tarana' is one of his several musical innovations which remains as fresh and invigorating today as it has ever been before.

'Tarana' is a Persian word meaning a song (in modern Urdu parlance it means a patriotic song). This style of singing is one in which denominational mnemonics like tom, dani etc., are sung. It also includes 'sargam' phrases (solfa names of musical notes) and drumming mnemonics which are combined in an attractive pattern. It employs only 'alap' syllables, and tones for their tonal values. In its present form, a singer tends to ignore the literary or the poetic merit of words which once used to be an essential part of this genre of music. In one sense, therefore, it is claimed to be an ideal form of purely musical expression because it does not have to

rely on the metrical structure of a given poetical piece.

Before refuting the assertion that 'tarana' syllables are meaningless words, let us advert for a moment and briefly discuss the definition of 'alap', for it is absolutely essential to fully understand the role of this form in classical singing before proceeding any further. According to Batra, who has given a rather romanticised definition, an 'alap':

"is the highest form of classical music in which notes are used in their abstract form only and as such it emerges free from sectarian, social, communal or environmental bounds. Its additional freedom from the garb of poesy and the fetters of structural time enables it to be developed to metaphysical heights savouring almost of the cosmic rhythmic progress of the Universe, which cannot be produced by any other form".¹

Comparing the 'alaps' of 'dhrupad' and 'tarana', G.H. Ranade has said:

"Tarana is a refined type of such 'alapas', for it is sung to a fixed measure of time and is further developed as an independent 'cheez' or song, of which the tones and not words speak. As the tarana is a composition in a strict measure of time and must put up an appeal without the aid of poetry, it requires great personal skill and ability of intelligent interpretation on the part of the artiste. Since it is sung usually to a fast time measure and employs numerous types of rhythmic arrangements, it helps the artistes to develop a subtle yet accurate sense of rhythm and a facility of musical improvisation at a very short notice. Thus in the 'tarana', the slow 'alapas' of the 'dhrupad' are linked up into different groups of melodic orders which serve as model links for the 'taans' (flights) and particularly for the 'boltans' in which the melody fully brings out the vowel and consonent values of the syllables employed".²

Khusrau's genius has not been surpassed during the last 700 years. One does not find several poets, musicians, mys-

tics, artists, linguists and soldier-statesmen who at different periods of time made deep and lasting impressions on the history of this part of the world, but it is well nigh impossible to cite one example where all these acquired incredible proficiency in several forms of creative arts that made him truly great.

The episode of his musical confrontation with Naik Gopal, an eminent singer from the South (of India), is too well known to illustrate his genius and quick-wittedness. It is mentioned in history books that the Amir, after listening to the renditions of Naik Gopal, repudiated all of them by saying that what he (Gopal) had sung earlier were all his (Khusrau's) inventions. As a proof, Khusrau reproduced all those ragas in his own (tarana) style of singing thereby completely baffling not only the singer from the South but also all those present in the royal court including Sultan Alauddin Khilji, who had arranged for this musical contest. This version of the contest is challenged by several Hindu historians and musicologists who claim that Naik Gopal accepted his defeat by not singing at all before an all-Muslim audience because he did not wish to commit an act of blasphemy against his sacred music of the Vedas.

Amir Khusrau, who died at the age of 72, saw the rise and fall of eleven kingdoms. From the ascendancy of these kingdoms to their decline and extinction, the Amir saw a great deal of social turmoil and political upheavals. It was perhaps the sufferings and killings during this period that affected his life and temperament and were partly responsible for his proclivity for sufism.

Khusrau wrote many books on music, poetry, mysticism etc., most of which are not available now. Lost among his works are a dozen books which he is reputed to have written on or about music. Despite this loss, however, it is not difficult to hazard an educated guess about his invaluable contributions towards the development of the music of the Sub-Continent. The original Indian music, which was considered by some as the relic of the world's oldest music,

does not exist today. Its present form owes much to the creative genius of Amir Khusrau who made radical changes both in its form and style. With these innovative improvements, which were advanced further by several Muslim musicians like Sultan Husain Sharqi, Mian Tansen and Naimat Khan Sadarang, the ancient Indian music underwent a complete transformation. The influence of Iranian and Arab music, through the conscious efforts of the Amir and others, resulted in the emergence of a Sub-Continental music completely distinct from the old Vedic Indian music. What we hear today in Pakistan, India and Bangladesh (excluding the Karnatak music of the Indian South) is this new form which came about as a result of that metamorphosis.

Like a receptive musician, who is open to a wide variety of musical stimuli, Amir Khusrau derived his inspiration from everywhere. 'Tarana' and 'Qawwali' are the two distinct forms of music which can be cited in support of this contention. Posterity scrupulously followed the musical legacy and rules of guidance in the form left by him.

Some Indian scholars claim that while introducing the tarana style of singing, "Khusrau had before him the example of Nirgit songs using meaningless words and mnemonic syllables of the mirdung (a percussion instrument)". "Such songs", it is further contended "were in vogue at least from the time of Bharat". Almost in the same breath, however, they admit that "Nirgit (songs) used hard consonants. Khusrau introduced two innovations in this form of vocal music. Firstly, he introduced mostly Persian words with soft consonants. Secondly, he so arranged these words that they bore some sense"³

Below are enumerated some of the so-called meaningless words which were used by Amir Khusrau for his new style of vocalisation called 'tarana'. What happened is that over the centuries these words were corrupted by their misuse and no serious attempts were made to bring them back to their original fold and contours which gave them definite meaning and perfect sense. These words were mostly taken from

Persian but there was a smattering of Arabic words also. They were chosen under a well-thought out plan and arrangement:

Dani	means you know
Nadir	means unique
Yala	means freedom
Derena	is a corruption of 'daireena' meaning old
Yalala	is a short form of Ya Allah
Yalali	is a short form of Ya Ali

The 'tarana' syllables also had some words from Brij Bhasha, the language of the masses during Amir Khusrau's time. They were for example: Diya, meaning 'gave', and tomna, meaning 'you'.

Doubtless, it was Khusrau's genius which paved the way for the innovative use of these Persian and Arabic words in the 'tarana' style of singing without impairing their meaning. It is therefore absurd to claim that 'tarana' syllables originally had meaningless words. It was only their constant misuse at the hands of presumably illiterate musicians which corrupted their pronunciation and accent, thereby making them sound meaningless and inane. Moreover, each 'tarana' composition originally had a Persian 'ghazal' or 'qaseeda' as an inseparable part of each composition, which is almost extinct now.

Because 'tarana' serves as a training ground in acquiring facility in 'tans' (flights), and particularly in 'boltans', stretching over a fixed interval of time, and on account of its ability to bring out the vowel and consonant effect fully, every good classical vocalist always keeps in his repertoire good taranas based on each raga. Among contemporary classical singers, the name of the late Ustad Amir Khan of Indore stands out. Unfortunately, this uncrowned king of 'tarana' was killed in a car accident in Calcutta in 1974. He was particularly known for his expertise in keeping the subtleties intact while rendering 'taranas' and was reputed to remember hundreds of Amir Khusrau's 'tarana's by heart with complete Persian texts. He remained an unsurpassed

exponent of the 'tarana' style of singing until his death.

In Pakistan, adherents of the Patiala and Sham Chaurasi 'gharanas' remember many 'taranas', which they render off and on. A good vocalist will always try his best to learn at least one 'tarana' for each raga that he knows without which he will not achieve acceptance by and status among contemporary musicians.

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1. R.L. Batra in "Science and Art of Indian Music"
 2. G.H.Ranade in "Hindustani Music — Its Physics and Aesthetics"
 3. Jaidev Singh, "The Evolution of Tarana"

MUSICAL GENRES

The Rise and Decline of Dhrupad

Music has always occupied a very high place in Hindu worship. From the ancient Sama-gana (chanting of sacred Ashlokas and Mantras from Sama-Veda) to the singing of 'Vishnupad', all forms of classical music were invariably used as adjuncts in the performance of religious rites.

The temple music, which was for a long time monopolised by the singing priests (the high-class Brahmins), was willfully kept away from the reach of the masses. Gradually, however, a vast majority of non-Brahmanic masses devised ways and means to give expression to their religious and musical yearnings. Beginning with folk music, they invented several different styles of musical expression. As a result, the temple music too could not resist changes and various styles such as 'Prabandha', 'Kirti', 'Bani', 'Chhind', 'Bhajan' and 'Vishnupad' were evolved during the course of many centuries before the advent of Islam in the Sub-Continent. Most of these forms were current simultaneously, thus causing chaos and confusion in the domain of religious music.

The 'Prabandas' and 'Banis' were the first to be evolved, which were subsequently replaced by 'Kiritis' and 'Bhajans', Jayadeva's Geeta Govinda (circa 1100 A.D.) also gained popularity. The Bengali poet invented that new style in which he assigned different ragas and 'talas' (time measures) to each of his poems.

Raja Maan Singh Tomaar of Gowaliar (1486-1526) getting conscious of the prevailing musical sensibilities of the masses, took upon himself the task of putting some order in the jungle of music. With the help of his court musicians, he reorganised the 'Vishnupad' style of devotional music by injecting into it, for the first time, the subject of human love and related mundane matters. Until then only spiritual topics

were allowed to be used in that singing style. With this change in its contents a new style emerged which became known as 'dhrupad'. Some musicologists do not credit Maan Singh with the invention of 'dhrupad'. They contend that he only modified the old style.

It will perhaps be useful to have a cursory glance at history before proceeding further. This will clear our perspective and help us understand the forces which were working in favour of such a change in the prevailing musical forms.

The contemporaries of Raja Maan Singh Tomar were: Behlol Lodhi in Delhi; Ghiasuddin Khilji in Malwa; Mahmood Baika in Gujrat; and Mahmood Behmini in Gulberga. In Sikander Lodhi's court, musicologists of the calibre of Miran Syed Nurullah and Syed Ibne Rasul were occupying high and honoured positions. Also during that period, Mian Taha was busy imparting training to local musicians in the Iranian style of singing. A number of forward-looking priest singers, who were aware of the emerging new trends in singing and who felt the dictates of time, also endeavoured to learn the intricacies of the Persian Muqaam System of music from Mian Taha. This Persian system had earlier been introduced in the Sub-Continent by Amir Khusrau.

At the same time, Sultan Hussain Sharqi Jaunpuri (1462-1500), according to "Ahange Khusravi", was also busy experimenting with his new styles. (He is considered one of the pioneers of the 'Kheyal' style of singing which was seeded in the musical soil of India by Amir Khusrau, irrigated by the fluid of innovative thoughts of Sultan Hussain Sharqi, and reaped by Naimat Khan Sadarang and his nephew Feroze Khan Adarang during Mohammad Shah Rangeela's period).

Obviously, the atmosphere in the Muslim courts was quite congenial for the nurturing of and experimenting with musical arts, and the hackneyed, old concepts or myths about music and its origin could not flourish therein.

Through the conscious efforts of Muslim sufis, the language of the masses, the Brij Bhasha (an embryonic

form of Urdu) also crept into the Muslim 'darbars'. This situation was skilfully exploited by Raja Maan Singh Tomaar to bring about substantive lingual and structural changes in the 'Vishnupad' style, to be known as 'dhrupad', which took concrete shape and gained easy popularity among the masses and in the royal courts. In contradistinction to 'Vishnupad', which was based only on spiritual theme, 'dhrupad' had temporal as well as mundane topics as its theme. Thus the use of commonly-understood language and a change in its theme helped 'dhrupad' in winning popular acclaim and the patronage of the royal courts as well.

Of all the styles of singing, 'dhrupad' is considered the most manly, arduous and yet effective in producing deep pathos and emotions. The notes of a 'dhrupad' composition or song have as a rule to be shorn of all ornamentations except that a restricted use of 'meend' (glide) and 'gamak' (trill) is permissible. As in an 'alap', the melody in a 'dhrupad' has got to be developed in all the four parts, namely, 'asthai', 'antara', 'sanchari', and 'abhog'. The tempo is preponderatingly 'bilampat' (tempo alagio) and the 'tal' (time bars) are long and of compound 'matras' (beats). The presently almost dying style of 'dhrupad' singing generally consists of only two parts now and it is in the second part or the 'antra' that the performer does his best and compresses everything that otherwise would have been developed in the remaining two parts.

'Dhrupad' is considered the most strict style in singing. "A style to deserve the name strict", says G.H. Ranade, "must of course contain the essentials of a system, in a clear and simple form, and it is so with the 'dhrupad' style. No flourishes or embellishments are allowed in its progression and it proceeds by determinate steps only. In other words, the 'dhrupad' strictly follows the two well-known principles, viz., of rhythmic movement and procedure by determinate degrees".¹

A dhrupad-singer is required to elaborate the chosen raga with 'alap'. Next, he begins to render his composition at first

to slow time. The poetic words of the composition are pegged on to an inflexible infrastructure in the form of time measure. As a result of this rigidity, the composition soon sounds jarring to the ears and becomes monotonous. An opportunity for some relief is provided when a well-aimed return to the old time-measure is made by the singer after doubling or trebling the time or tempo of the song.

Like any other genre of music, 'dhrupad' also has its strengths and weaknesses. Its strongest feature is the strict adherence of its exponents to the two basic principles of rhythmic advance and progression by determinate degrees. The constant aim of the performer is naturally to create the maximum possible effect with a few simple clean notes unaccompanied by any flourishes, shakes or such other touches of grace. Its main weakness, however, is its monotonous repetition of notes and strict avoidance of the use of ornamentations.

'Dhrupad' sung in 'dhammar' time measure i.e., fourteen beats (3-2-3-2-2-2), when its poetic contents are based on epics of Lord Krishna's playful youth is called Hori or Hori Dhammar. This form of musical composition also has religious connotation.

The past eight hundred years or so have produced great 'dhrupad' singers, who were honoured and rewarded lavishly by royal courts in the Sub-Continent. The legendary Mian Tansen was one of the most popular exponents of this genre of music. This style of singing has now almost vanished from the musical ethos. In India, for example, only the well-known Dagar Brothers are trying to keep its flag fluttering.

In Pakistan, there is hardly any exponent of 'dhrupad' style of singing who performs through radio, television or stage. Only on rare occasions (at private 'mehfils') a scion of a gharana would display this art just to assert his musical prowess. Otherwise, as a popular medium of musical expression, this genre is fast disappearing from our musical ethos.

1. G.H. Ranade, Hindustani Music – Its Physics and Aesthetics

MUSICAL GENRES

Kheyal: A Muslim Invention

The 'Kheyal' style of singing, which has been reigning supreme in the domain of classical music in the Sub-Continent since the eighteenth century, is the most important form of musical compositions. Steeped deeply in Muslim traditions, it took almost 500 years for this genre to reach the pinnacle of success and glory. It grew side by side with 'dhrupad' but ultimately elbowed it out, thus causing its eclipse.

Like several other musical genres ('tarana', 'qawwali', 'kafi', 'ghazal', etc) 'Kheyal' is unquestionably a Muslim innovation which has completely revolutionised the music of this part of the world. Some scholars and historians even assert that it had started germinating during the lifetime of Amir Khurrau in the thirteenth century. Khusrau's reclassification of Sub-Continental ragas according to the Persian Moqaam System served as the natural womb out of which 'Kheyal' was born. Sharqi kings of Jaunpore, especially the last one, Sultan Hussain (1457-- 1500), it is also claimed by some, made invaluable contributions to its nourishment. But it is generally agreed that this "supreme expression of Muslim musical genius" reached its acme during the period of Muhammad Shah Rangeela (1719 - 1748).

Sultan Husain Sharqi's study of music was deep, and like a professional singer, he had undergone rigorous training for many years. He made his mark in the world of music which history could not ignore to record. He had a hand in fashioning the golden era of music. According to 'Tareekh-e-Farishta', Sultan Hussain Sharqi was a great patron of arts and literature like his illustrious grandfather Ibrahim Shah. He composed several new ragas (Jaunpuri, Hussaini Kanra, Hussaini Todi, etc). He is considered one of the pioneers of

Kheyal form of musical expression.

However; the credit for furbishing and perfecting the 'kheyal' style rightly goes to Naimat Khan Sadarang, the court musician of Muhammad Shah Rangeela, who was ably assisted in his innovative efforts by his equally talented nephew and son-in-law, Feroze Khan Adarang. Together they composed hundreds of new kheyals and made this genre almost immortal.

The phenomenon of 'kheyal' is the culmination of the innovative efforts of the Muslim musicians and scholars spanning several centuries, and the interaction between the two prevailing systems of music (the Persian Moqaam System and the now-extinct Gram Morchanna system) during the Muslim rule in the Sub-Continent. V.H. Deshpande, in his "Indian Musical Traditions", has very aptly remarked :

"When a prevailing art form becomes too familiar and ceases to satisfy the listeners adequately, intelligent singers desire to try their hand at innovations".

While discussing the evolution of 'kheyal', he further comments:

"We have no reliable information about the kind of music sung before the 'dhrupad-dhammar' music came into vogue and reached the height of popularity. We only know that it developed in the fifteenth century, gradually became popular and by the end of 17th century it had already begun to fall out of favour. Intelligent and forward-looking musicians, therefore, began to think of introducing innovations into the 'dhrupad' form and it was this tendency which found its mature expression in the rise of the 'kheyal' in the eighteenth century".

'Kheyal' literally means 'fancy or imagination', 'feeling' and 'imaginative verse'. It also means both imagination and imaginative compositions. This form consists of two varieties, namely, 'barra' (in fast tempo) and 'chhota' (in slow tempo). It is composed in a number of time measures (tals) such as 'talwara' (32 matras) 'jhoomra' (fourteen matras); 'dheema teental' (sixteen matras); 'ek tala' (twelve matras), and

'jhaptal' (ten matras) etc. Both the varieties are marked by extremely variegated colourfulness made possible by the use of 'gamak' (trill), 'meend' (glide), 'kans' (subtle touches of other notes) 'tans' 'meend' (glide), 'kans' (subtle touches of other notes). The musical composition of 'kheyal' is full of graces. Simple, straight notes are rarely used. Some sort of modulation of notes enters into every melodic phrase of 'kheyal'. It is made charming by the use of melodic idioms expressive of different shades of emotion. This style of singing is in vogue in Pakistan, Northern India (as distinguished from the Karanatak areas) and Bangladesh. Some vocalists in Afghanistan have also adopted this style of singing.

In contradistinction to 'dhrupad', which is shorn of embellishments, 'kheyal' form is interspersed with all sorts of ornamentations. The slow, steady and sure development of 'kheyal' enables the musicians to preserve its serenity, beauty of form and creative fancy. After singing the 'asthayee' once or twice completely, the 'antara' is sung once, so as to enable listeners to grasp the poetic thrust of the composition which is often based on spiritual themes. The 'kheyal' emerged as an unavoidable alternative to 'dhrupad' and as relief from the monotony which had been created by the latter in the minds of listeners.

'Kheyal', According to G.R. Ranade, "incorporates in itself the very best of each form of composition and on that account easily surpasses the other forms". "This is the secret then", he concluded, "why the 'kheyal' of all forms has been receiving the homage of all music lovers for the last two centuries and over".¹

Some Indian musicologists and scholars, including Ranade, maintain that the Muslims "did not invent the 'kheyal' style of singing but simply gave it an Arabic name". According to them, its ingredients were already there in the Gram Murchanna system of ancient Indian music. In their misplaced exuberance to rub this point in, they often quote sources whose veracity does not stand to reason. They even

cast aspersions on Muslim musicians of yore and their influence on the Sub-Continental music. The late Kailash Chandra Berhaspati has rightly chastised those who have claimed that "the music of Northern India, because of Muslim influence, became impure and erratic, and therefore got infested by Islamic nuances and inclinations . . . and that the music of the South remained safe from foreign influences". "No matter what meaning is imputed to kheyal", he further remarked "It is the fruit of the labour of Muslim sufis. 'Kheyal' means such melodic invention as is impregnated with spiritual topics and nuances. 'Kheyal' compositions abound with verses eulogising the greatness of God and the mission of His prophets".²

V.N. Bhatkhande, in his *Lakhshia Sangeet*, has made the following comments:

"Scholars after Sarangadeva could not understand Sangeet Ratnakar. It was simply impossible for them to discern the system of Murchannas mentioned by him (Sarangadeva, the author of Ratnakar). Neither anyone of them could throw any light on the classification of ragas within the system of 'jatis'. As a result thereof, the ancient (and now extinct) music could not be demonstrated. Changes in music are inevitable. As long as the 'thaths' of Gram ragas are not known, 'granth' (books on music) become meaningless. Although I take pride in acknowledging the existence of ancient 'granth' and have even tried my level best to understand them yet I have not succeeded in my efforts".

These remarks of the great revivalist of classical music in the 20th century should once and for all have settled the issue that the music of the Sub-Continent in vogue at present is not the one which was in use during ancient times. And this metamorphosis has been the result of the efforts of Muslim musicians, scholars and musicologists which they made during the course of the past eight hundred years.

There are several schools (gharanas) of 'kheyal' exponents which are known for their distinct styles of singing, aesthetic

approaches to music, and the methods of voice production. Prominent among these are Patiala, Talwandi, Gowaliar, Indore, Delhi, Agra, Rampur, Kirana and Jaipur. Some of the greatest 'kheyal' singers of the twentieth century have been Abdul Karim Khan (Kirana); Amir Khan (Indore), Bade Ghulam Ali Khan (Patiala), the like of whom history will perhaps not be able to produce in the near future.

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1. G.H. Ranade, "Hindustani Music: Its Physics and Aesthetics"
 2. "Musalmaan Aur Barre Sagheer Ki Masueeqi" by K.C. Berhespati – Urdu translation published by the Music Research Cell, Lahore.

Thumri – its origin and development

In contrast with the spontaneous musical expression of particular communities or ethnic groups, the hallmark of folk music, 'thumri' has been developed and promoted by individuals at different periods of time. Because it enjoys comparative freedom from the rigidities and conformities of orthodox classical music, it is named light classical music as distinguished from folk music.

At the fag-end of Muslim rule in the Sub-Continent, when out of a fear of insecurity and the prevailing anarchy, a majority of musicians of the Moghul Court in Delhi (the symbol of Central authority) shifted to the relative quietness and safety of smaller principalities, a new musical movement gained momentum which sought to seek some relaxation from the structural limitations of 'kheyal' to allow singers to express lighter forms of enjoyable musical thoughts. This new trend resulted in the emergence of 'thumri' and 'dadra', the two closely-related genres of music which gained currency during the first half of the nineteenth century and are as popular among the musicians now as they were then.

The most widely current theory connects the origin of 'thumri' (and 'dadra') with the royal courts of Avvadh, especially that of Nawab Wajid Ali Shah, who himself was a musician of great merit and pre-eminence and whose court brimmed with the expertise of competent musicians em-

played therein. 'Thumri', which phonetically speaking, sounds like a feminine name, is indicative of a striking note of tenderness and the themes of its songs are invariably related to some phase of human love in a state of amorous separation or union. The word 'thumri', it is also generally believed, is a derivation of 'thummak', which denotes 'a graceful stamp of the foot' and is suggestive of 'its relation to dance and gesticulation'.

The themes of 'thumri' songs more often than not are related to one of the following emotions:

1. entreaties of the lady love to the lover to remain favourably disposed towards her;
2. expression of grief over the lover's prolonged absence;
3. cursing the advent of good weather (monsoon or spring) which came about without bringing the lover with it;
4. beseeching the crow to go and search out the lover and bring back a message from him;
5. bemoaning and brooding over the watchfulness of the mother-in-law, who prevents meetings with the husband, and over the tinkling bells of anklets bound around the feet of the wives by jealous husbands to prevent and thwart any clandestine visits;
6. appeals to female friends (sakhis) for their help in arranging an interview or meeting with the lover; and
7. the 'sakhis' reminding their friend of the appointment and exhorting her to remain steadfast.

Like other genres, 'thumri' has its own distinct characteristics which distinguish it from other forms of music. Unlike the orthodox style of singing such as 'kheyal', the poetic contents of its songs play a major role in creating the desired pleasing effect. Sometimes its poetic themes have dual meanings — the spiritual as well as the mundane — like those in 'kafis' or any other form of folk songs. Scales common with folk songs are used for a majority of 'thumri' songs. They employ notes from all the consonances, which are so conspicuous in folk music. Therefore, a 'thumri'

generally employs such folk-oriented ragas as 'kafi', 'pahari', 'mand', 'khamach', 'peelo', and 'bhairvi'. 'Thumris' are sung in other ragas too, like 'behag' and 'sohni', etc. but these represent exceptions rather than the rule. The present lyrical form of 'thumri' is the result of the restricted range of ragas suitable for its rendering. Many musicians therefore consider it the most lyrical of all forms of light classical music. For proper rendition of a 'thumri', a special quality of voice — natural or cultivated — is required and recommended by vocalists. Female voice — generally considered superior to male voice in producing desired effects — is commonly found suitable for thumri singing.

At one time, the exponents of 'thumri' were condemned to a lower social status because of the association of thumri with the 'khathak' style of dance, which too was looked down upon as an inferior dance style. However, many competent classical vocalists of the recent past, by adopting 'thumri' singing, raised the status of its exponents to a high level of social acceptance. 'Thumris' are generally sung in 'chachar' or 'chanchal', 'Punjabi theka' or slow 'teental' time measures. Innovative singers generally mix their 'thumri' renditions with beautiful touches of folk songs, which are marked with rhythmical candences or swings. Another striking feature of a 'thumri' is that the embellishments in its are, for the most part, tonal-verbal and not purely tonal, which is the main characteristic of orthodox classical music. 'Thumri' is, therefore, a variety of light classical music which metamorphosed as a result of a prolonged and collective impact of classical as well as folk music.

'Thumris' can also be rendered on plucked, bowing and wind instruments such as sitar and sarod, sarangi and violin, and flute and shahani respectively. All these instruments are so made as to produce all the peculiar effects of a 'thumri' except that of its linguistic component. A competent instrumentalist therefore is capable of rendering a 'thumri' with all its fine points and intricacies.

Major characteristics and strong points of a 'thumri' can

best be enumerated as follows :

- a) flexibility in the elaboration of ragas;
- b) preponderating nuances of amorous sentiments in songs;
- c) greater reliance on verbal-tonal embellishments as opposed to purely tonal ones in orthodox classical styles;
- d) preference for a feminine voice; and
- e) structural limitations within folk-oriented ragas.

These features represent light musical patterns which are recognised by all scholars and musicologists. 'Thumri', therefore, marks one of the occasional manifestations of the indigenous trends in forms and modes of musical expression. Despite its somewhat lower status in the scale of standards of orthodox classical music, 'thumri' enjoys an important place in the present-day musical hierarchy. It is considered an essential part of any worthwhile musical concert these days without which no musical entertainment is deemed satisfying to ardent music lovers, connoisseurs and cultivated laymen. Very few practising musicians, parenthetically speaking, have attained eminence in the domain of music solely on the acknowledged thumri singers have therefore been exponents primarily of the kheyal style. "Finer shades of rendering thumri by notable musicians have never been individualised as distinct gharanas of thumri singers but have always been identified with the gharanas of the kheyal style to which particular musicians owed allegiance", observes a contemporary musicologist.¹

Of the several brands of thumri, three are very popular. These are the Benarsi, the Lucknavi and the Punjabi. These are identified broadly with the eastern and western parts of UP (in India) and the province of the Punjab (which is now divided between Pakistan and India). Varanasi or Benars and Lucknow have been the centres of the two styles which originated in the UP. The Lucknow style or 'baaj' was particularly patronised and developed by the royal courts of Avvadh, more so by Nawab Wajid Ali Shah. It is charac-

terised by "a certain grace, tenderness, sweetness, elegance of rendering and flexibility of tonal embellishments".² In this, it is contrasted with the Punjabi style, which is interspersed with "a profuse deployment of successive tonal embellishments, elaborate turns and trials (murkis) woven into taan-like patterns in quick tempo"³ typically characteristic of the tappa style of singing whose strong influence on the Punjabi style of thumri is so preponderant. Some of the greatest exponents of both the Benaras and Lucknow styles of thumri have been Ustad Abdul Karim Khan, Ustad Fayyaz Khan, Rassolan Bai, Begum Akhter (Akhteribai Faizabadi) and Payare Sahib, while Ustad Bade Ghulam Ali Khan, his brother Ustad Barkat Ali Khan, and Mukhtar Begum successfully represented the Punjabi style. The present day exponents of Punjabi style in Pakistan are Ustad Salamat Ali Khan, Ustad Fateh Ali Khan and Fareeda Khanum in addition to some other lesser known vocalists.

Considered even lighter than thumri is 'dadra'. This style of singing has mostly the same characteristics as form part of a thumri. Its structure, theme and treatment are very much like a thumri. The main difference, however, is the time measure used for this genre. It is sung only in a time measure (of six beats), which is also known as dadra. Understandably, the dadra style of singing derived its name from the dadra time measure.

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1. Prem Lata Sharma, the Origin of Thumri.
 2. *ibid.*
 3. *ibid.*

MUSICAL GENRES

Tappa — gift from the Punjab

'Tappa' is yet another style of vocalisation developed to classical perfection during the Muslim rule in the Sub-Continent. The credit for this innovation is given by historians and scholars to Mian Ghulam Nabi Shori (son of Mian Ghulam Rasul, a court musician of Nawab Asafuddaullah of Awadh).

Young Shori developed this style of singing out of a simple rural folk tune sung commonly by the camel drivers of olden times in the areas then known as the Punjab. It is not as entangled or intricate as the 'kheyal' style, but notwithstanding its comparative simplicity, it succeeded in retaining substantially the brightness of the 'kheyal'.

Muhammad Karam Imam in his book, 'Ma'adan-e-Mauseeqi' (authored in 1855), while dwelling upon this genre of music, says:

"The inventor of 'tappa', Mian Ghulam Nabi Shori, is an extremely moody and carefree person who does not bother about wordly possessions and cares very little for mundane matters. He even does not practice music regularly. Once he crossed the path of the 'cavalcade' of Asfuddaullah. The Nawab invited Mian Shori to visit his palace sometime. Shori, in his usual mystical trance, quite innocently inquired where his palace was, as he confessed his ignorance about its location. Asafuddaullah in an equally lighter vein replied, "Ask someone in the street". The long and short of this episode is that Shori was led to the palace of the Nawab by someone. Asafuddaullah showed great respect to Mian Shori and bestowed upon him a monetary grant and some honours. True to his temperament, Shori distributed all that money among those who happened to meet him on his way back home from the palace. Asafuddaullah, when informed of

the benovelance of Mian Shori, sent an equivalent amount to his (Shori's) residence”.

The Nawabs of Awadh, after the disintegration of the Mughal empire, extended their patronage to musicians and artistes. Muhammad Akram Imam has also written on or about the professional musicians of his time. From the point of view of history, this portion of his book is considered very important, as it sheds light on the lives and expertise of the top-most musicians of that period.

Imam's ancestors came from Ghaur (Afghanistan) and were appointed chaudhries of a 'pargana' in Awadh by Emperor Akbar. Their descendents including such personalities as Muhammad Zorawar Ali Khan, Muhammad Karam Imam and his father, Muhammad Dilawar Ali Khan, were among the illustrious scions of this clan. Imam had had many opportunities to meet the notables of his time and also to hear top musicians then prospering as a result of their generousities. He was of the opinion that musical glory was already on the wane because of lack of education among its practitioners. Several genres of music like 'dhrupad', 'hori', and even 'thumri', according to him, were rapidly degenerating.

A.H. Fox Strangways, in his book, "Music of Hindostan", while elaborating a 'tappa' composition, which he wrote in Western Staff Notation, has said :

"The typical form of composition which exhibits 'grace' in all its glory is the Mohammandan 'tappa', in which melodic flow and rhythmical structure are so veiled that it has seemed worth while to give them in a simpler statement" (Then he describes in a graphic form the particular 'tappa' composition.

He has further remarked :

"The trill (Hindustani murki, Urdu zamzama) considered to be suitable to the female voice, of which the 'tappa' is full, and the marked rhythm, are the Mohammaedan contribution. The Mohammedan invasions did for Indian what the dissolution of monasteries and the Civil War did for English music. The 'tappa' is exclusively in Hindi and

Punjabi. It recites the loves of Heer and Ranjha. It was brought to perfection by the songster Shori (reign of Mahmud Shah, cric. 1700). It consists, like most Hindostani songs, of two movements (tuks), the 'asthai' and the 'antara'. The 'rekhta', another form of it, contains up to a dozen couplets".

'Tappa' is derived from the root word, 'tapp', meaning short halt. It generally employs the same ragas as are used in a 'thumri' — 'peelo', 'khamach', 'tilak kamod', 'pharai', etc. Its scope is therefore quite limited as it does not aim at a slow or gradual progression of the theme. "Even from the beginning", says Ranade, "tappa reveals in ornamental flourishes at the occurrence of almost every accented portion of the bar and builds up the melody by elaborate turns and trills, rather than by a glide which is scarcely used in a 'tappa'. Known as 'murkis', these turns and trills have several sub-varieties such as 'khatak', 'gitkari', 'zamzama', 'sans', and 'ans', etc. These 'murkis' are a speciality of the 'tappa' and provide good practice in developing vocal facility in singing several kinds of delicate 'tans'. The one point, to be remembered about the 'tans' or melodic flourishes of the 'tappa', is that, whether the 'tan' is simple or ornamental, the successive links, taken up or down, are taken step by step only and without any break between them". "A melodic or ornamental phrases", he adds, "begins on a bar and continues over its full extent. Then another phrase begins on the next bar and continues over that bar and in this manner the melody moves over all the four bars or stages or spans of each cycle of the 'tappa' measure".¹

Concluding his description, Ranade says: "Tappa literally means a stage or a halting place on a journey and since there are four such stages in the 'tappa' measure, the style is named as 'tappa' itself".²

This style of singing has during the course of a century gone out of circulation and is not much in vogue these days. Its vivid traces, however, are found in the 'Punjabi ang' 'thumri' and 'dadra' which is considered robust among the

different kinds of 'thumri's sung in the Sub-Continent these days. 'Tappa' influences on the Punjabi-style 'thumri' makes it quite distinguishable from others. 'Ghazal' singing style in vogue in Pakistan these days has also absorbed tappa influences.

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1. G.H. Ranade, "Hindustani Music: Its Physics and Aesthetics
 2. ibid

MUSICAL GENRES

Qawwali — Musical expression of sufism

Like 'Tarana', 'Qawwali' is also ascribed to the creative genius of Amir Khusrau, who enlivened and revolutionised the otherwise decadent and monotonous music of the pre-Islamic India by reclassifying the ancient system of Gram Morchnna and jatis in accordance with the universally-accepted Persian moqaam system. (Some historians are of the opinion that 'Qawwali' in a somewhat different form was already in vogue before Amir Khusrau was born). This great 13th century sufi-saint won the heart of his mentor, Hazrat Nizam-ud-Din Aulia by perfecting the 'qawwali' form of music which satiated the devotional desires and subliminal feelings of the Muslims.

A perennial controversy as to the extent to which music can be used in the discharge of religious obligations to God has always been there in Muslim society. While a segment of religious scholars has argued that music of all kinds has been disallowed in Islam, others have contended that 'samaa' is permissible. It is not only not repugnant to the spirit of Islam, they maintain, but also helps in bringing about a catharsis. The Chishtia and Suharwardia denominations of Muslim sufis therefore approved of musical activities and effectively used this medium in spreading the message of Islam in the Sub-Continent much before the victorious Turkish armies conquered the vast territories of India.

The chief of the Suharwardia branch of sufism, Sheikh Bahauddin Zikria (d. 1267), for example, was a great scholar of music. Baba Farid-ud-Din Gunj Shakar (d. 1256) greatly admired 'qawwali'. Hazrat Nizam-ud-Din Aulia Chishti used to get into a trance after listening to 'qawwalis'. Hazrat Qutub-ud-Din Bakhtiar Kaki died (1236) during a musical trance while listening to 'qawwali'. Whereas the sufis con-

sidered music as a means for spreading Islamic preachings, in the eyes of Muslim kings music was only a means of recreation. Kaikabad (1290) had many musicians in his court who used to render Persian songs along with Hindi 'dohas'. During the Tughliq and Khilji periods, many 'qawwals' used to sing Hindi songs along with Persian 'ghazals'. Incidentally, it was the Khilji period during which Amir Khusrau reclassified Indian musical system in accordance with the Persian Moqaam system.

The sufis used music as a means of divine communication and consequently attracted local attention without much ado. As most Hindu worship was performed through the medium of music and as low caste Hindus were denied entrance into the Brahmin-controlled temples, the Chishti sufis used this medium in their proselytising ventures. They were actually aware of the fact that the down-trodden masses in those days, because of Brahminic bigotry, had become sick of the prevailing social, religious and economic order, and wanted emancipation from the oppressive hold of the Brahmins.

Side by side, the sufis learnt local languages, dialects and melodies which facilitated their communication with the people. Having done so, they juxtaposed their own mystic songs on local tunes and often mixed them with Persian and Arab music. They also used local diction to make those songs intelligible for the local populace. Thus a new variety of music, an amalgam of local and foreign tunes, began taking shape.

Before the advent of Islam, the Sub-Continental music comprised several genres which were used by the people primarily for performing their religious rites. Beginning with the prehistoric Vedic chants (Sama-gana) and coming down to the 'bhajans' and the 'kirtins', Hindu music was interspersed with several other forms evolved by the singing priests from the time of Bharat (300 B.C.) to the period of Jaidev (11th century), the inventor of 'Kirtins', so as to facilitate the discharge of their daily liturgical chores. Music

has always occupied (and continued to occupy) a high place in Hindu religious hierarchy.

When Muslim sufis came to India, the first thing which struck them was the important role which music played in the socio-religious life of the local inhabitants. Realising that Islamic mysticism in Indian environment would also require a medium of expression quite different from the one prevailing, they tried to evolve a *modus vivendi* which would augment their proselytising efforts and assist them in coming closer to the masses. It would also help them to communicate with the people and attract their attention towards the tenets of Islam. Those sufis, who were already well versed in the Turkish, Persian and Arab forms of music, started learning local (mainly folk) music. Soon they brought about a synthesis of the two systems (indigenous and Islamic) which they later successfully exploited in spreading the message of Islam. As a result, 'qawwali', the musical expression of sufism, began to emerge. It was fully developed and perfected by Amir Khusrau.

There is no religious music as such in Islam. Neither it allows any mass singing, as is the case with other faiths. It "prescribes no liturgical songs, no psalmody for its followers for the performance of their religious obligations towards God"¹ Still, the melodious rendition of 'naats' and 'hamds' slowly became a devotional practice among the Muslims. This can be termed denominational music. Perhaps, it was the force of circumstances which brought to the fore the needs of the Muslims to find a medium to express their devotional feelings as the prevailing form of devotional music, the 'bhajan', could not serve their purpose. It simply did not suit the temperament, sensibilities and likings of the Muslims. They found it too cumbersome, it was not very intelligible to them either.

(The Bhajan, 'adoration', is connected with Bhakti 'faith in a personal god'; 'love for him as for a human being, the dedication of everything to his service, and the attainment of 'moksa' (emanicipation) by this means rather than by know-

ledge, or sacrifice, or works'. It specialises in the Krishna literature and it is a religious recital in which the congregation sing all the time under a leader Its invention is ascribed to Chandi Das.²

Amir Khusrau sensed the predicament of the Muslims and tried to improve the prevailing 'Bhajan' form somewhat. The kinds of musical forms which Muslims preferred were those which could be used to sing 'hamd' 'naat', 'ghazal', 'rubaiyat', 'khamasa', and 'musnavi', etc. There was no scope in the 'Bhajan' form of music for the expression of these poetical and religious thoughts. Therefore, there was a pressing need and religious requirement for a new musical form, which could encompass such poetical expressions. The earlier sufis had already done the spadework and had laid the foundations of a new musical form which could do the needful. With a touch of the genius of Amir Khusrau the embryonic state of the new form took tangible shape. This new form became to be known as 'Qawwali'.

'Qawwali' is sung in a chorus style with one person providing the lead. It begins with a free, slow repetition of a stanza and is built gradually to a raucous climax often with theatrical pauses and descrescendo in between. It uses a distinct time measure. A 'qawwal' party may comprise from four to twelve persons. Originally, it used only Persian poetry, but later Urdu and Punjabi mystic songs were also included in its repertoir. There are many 'qawwal' parties in the country, a number of them below the mark. However, some groups of 'qawwals' can present masterly rendition of 'qawwalis' in their original form.

Fateh Ali Khan-Mubarak Ali Khan 'qawwals', who (until not long ago) held complete sway in the Sub-Continent for several decades, were counted among the best. (Kaloo and Peero Qawwals also created names for themselves by their masterly renditions of 'qawwalis'). They were master musicians who knew the art and science of music very well. They trained scores of musicians — vocalists and instrumentalists — whose expertise in classical music won them wide

and popular acclaim.

Sabri Brothers and Aziz Mian Qawwals are among those 'qawwals' who are not only very effective in the renditions of this genre of music, but are also popularising it both in and outside the country. Some years ago, for instance, Sabri Brothers enthralled American audiences in New York and earned praises in the American Press. The audiences clapped and shouted deliriously and one American went so beyond himself that he bloodied his head banging it into the side of the stage. The 'qawwali', 'Tajdar-i-Harem', especially stirred the American audiences. Several other 'qawwal' groups from Pakistan have toured the Middle East, Europe, India, Africa, and the countries of the Far East where they attracted local attention. Only those 'qawwals' who take particular care of the tonal qualities of their voices are popular, for whatever the genre of music, it is always the 'sur' that matters the most. It has been commonly observed that the 'qawwalis' are enjoyed even by those who cannot understand the lyrics.

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1. Amin-ur Rehman, "Devotional music of the Muslims", Pakistan Times, Lahore, September 14, 1979.
 2. A.H. Fox Strangways, in the "Music of Hindostan".

vocalists of the early periods or on those musicians who claim to have inherited these forms from their ancestors. But this approach is not free from pitfalls, as it lacks the means to check the veracity of the originality of those forms which came down to the community of musicians from generation to generation.

With the advent of gramophone in the thirties, however, 'ghazal' as a musical genre began to emerge as a distinct and vibrant form and some evidence was hereafter available which could vouch for its traditional purity. Thus it is only very late during its evolutionary period that 'ghazal' provided us with some auditory evidence of its early style(s). Actually, those recordings are not of much help either because they do not tell us when exactly 'ghazal' started its development process. However, it can be safely assumed that 'ghazal', during the course of the past few centuries had been sucking into its form some nuances of 'dhrupad', 'kheyal' and 'thum-ri'/ 'tappa' genres of music which dominated the musical ethos during the heydays of the Mughal period and thereafter. There is no doubt that the above-mentioned genres influenced 'ghazal' during its embryonic stage of development. In its present varieties, 'ghazal' sounds like an amalgam of bits and pieces taken from several other genres. This is easily discernable to a musically-trained mind.

About the early 'ghazal'-singing styles, unfortunately not much is available by way of literature either. There are several plausible reasons for this neglect on the part of scholars and musicologists. It is argued that since 'ghazal' had been associated with the clan of singing girls (who were prospering only on the munificence of the philandering princes, nawabs and aristocrats), it was not held in high esteem by the masses. Those singing girls, it is further asserted, did not enjoy high social status. Therefore, their lore did not attract much attention from writers and scholars. Additionally, and perhaps unjustifiably 'ghazal'-singing was considered a 'light form' of musical expression which was not very popular during the last days of the Mughal period and

during the British Raj. Hence musicologists ignored it rather contemptuously and deliberately. Since 'ghazal' as a literary form was quite popular among the masses and a lot had been written about it, the scholars did not feel inclined to dwell upon its melodic aspect. This factor alone acted as a psychological barrier in the way of production of literature pertaining to its musical rendition. The gramophone discs cut during the thirties are therefore about the only source which researchers can fall back upon in their quest to find the origin of 'ghazal'-singing.

All musicians and musicologists agree that the musical evolution of 'ghazal' occurred in three easily distinguishable stages. In the beginning, its melodic version was rigidly confined within the limits of a cyclic metre and the use of fast tempo in this particular style precluded any musical elaboration or a display of various rhythmic patterns. More often than not, the same tune was allowed to be used by the recording companies for the rendition of several 'ghazals' which differed so radically content-wise. Since all metre is cyclical, its peculiar beats can be converted into a musical 'taal' — time measure. However, following the beats too regularly and rigidly ipso facto results in blocking musical creativity. Improvisation in such circumstances is not possible either because in this form music is so regularly and exactly channelised that it ceases to flow. It then becomes a mere recital of a song which is set to tune so that it can be memorised. A vocalist therefore is highly reluctant to deviate from the metrical beats which totally control the expression.

The second stage in the evolution of 'ghazal' as a musical genre occurred when attempts were made to disentangle it from the tight grip of poetic metre. A large number of talented and innovative vocalists made conscious efforts and succeeded in casting this new mould for it. They reshaped the contours of 'ghazal'-singing in such a way as to allow sufficient room to accommodate 'thumri' and 'tappa' characteristics with ease. It was during this period that 'ghazal'-singing became the pride of many celebrated classical vocalists. The

leading lights among such exponents of this modified version of 'ghazal' were Gohar Jan, Shamshad Bai (of Agra) and Peyare Sahib before Independence. The infusion of 'thumri' and 'tappa' features with 'ghazal'-singing created deeper appeal for the listeners and proved a very successful synthetic experiment. As a result thereof, 'ghazal' started ascending higher and higher on the popularity scale and at the same time became more complex as a genre. Many vocalists created name for themselves by adopting this new style of 'ghazal'-singing. Barkat Ali Khan, Akhtaribai Faizabadi, Muhammad Hussain Nagina and Bhai Chhela were some of those exponents of the thumri-tappa accented 'ghazal' who have left indelible marks on the annals of music. Their inclination towards evocative, verbal articulation remained the hallmark of their expertise.

The third stage in the musical evolution of 'ghazal' began when the simple and yet heavily orchestrated film music began to overshadow all other prevalent forms of music in the Sub-Continent. Saigol, Malika Pukhraj, Amirbai Karnatki, Kamla Jharia and several other vocalists point towards song-accented 'ghazals' which became extremely popular with the beginning of the fourth decade of the present century. Later, because of the relative simplicity of the new form, there came a deluge. A host of new singers appeared on the musical scene: G.M. Durrani, Muhammad Rafi, Mangeshkar, Talat Mahmood, Mubarak Begum, and scores of lesser known artistes.

The high point of this phase was the large and predetermined presence of tonal colours brought about by an intelligent use of modern orchestra and carefully planned instrumental interludes. Obviously, the success of such compositions rested upon the imaginative use of harmonization, which is so appealing even to raw ears. In such a composition, the presence of the composer is also felt through the tonal and rhythmic embellishments of the composition.

Among the pioneers of song-accented 'ghazal' composers the name of Anil Biswas can easily be singled out. His first

experimentation with this style ('dil jalta hai to jalne dey') in film "Pehli Nazar", which was rendered by debutant Mukesh, became an instant hit. Based on the rudiments of raga 'darbari', the composition was interspersed with scalatal variations and became a true representative of the newly emerging style of 'ghazal'-singing.

After touching the high point, this style of 'ghazal'-singing, too, now seems to be showing a downward trend on the popularity scale. There are clear signs which suggest that it is being sucked back into the powerful 'thumri-tappa' vortex with the difference that the emerging shape will have more tonal colours and will be artistically more sound as it will be richer in its musical contents than heretofore. It is not a retrogressive step but it is a leap forward because the new form will contain all the best points from all the musical genres, including 'sargam' singing. Young Ghulam Ali has already successfully demonstrated it. All in all, ghazal is becoming more popular and enjoyable, notwithstanding the classical aroma which it emits.

Musical heritage, as in the case of other art forms, does not remain static. Changing local environment and nuances of evolutionary processes have their impact on them. Accordingly, 'ghazal'-singing is again undergoing transformation, albeit its basic contours remaining the same. It has now emerged as one of the most popular music forms which has benefitted tremendously from its past traditions, as well as from the rich contributions made by its contemporary exponents. Ghulam Ali and Mehdi Hassan have been extremely successful in blending 'ghazal'-singing traditions with their characteristically unimitable styles which brim with lively innovations.

In the undivided Sub-Continent, the late Barkat Ali Khan was considered the pioneer of the 'thumri/tappa' style of 'ghazal' singing and his name still commands great respect. He was perhaps the first among known vocalists who formulated a syntax, outlined basic prerequisites and laid sound foundations of this style. Then appeared vocalists like Mukhtar

Begum, Ali Bakhsh Zahoor, Ali Bakhsh Kasuri and Ijaz Hussain Hazarvi, who helped this form in attaining perfection and greater glory. With the fading away of the early stalwarts, new artistes like Mehdi Hassan, Ghulam Ali, Farida Khanum, Iqbal Bano and several others quickly moved in to fill the void. Not only did they carry the torch of ghazal singing further but also tremendously enriched it with their wholesome contributions.

KAFI: Asceticism through music

Written only in the Punjabi and Sindhi languages (which have many common features and characteristics), *Kafi* was used by sufi saints as a vehicle to give vent to their poetical and philosophical expression. These expressions usually pivoted around the themes of Divine Love, the mortal nature of this world and its illusory character, the probationary status of man's life on earth (stressing the point that the world is merely a preparation ground for a better and fuller life to come), pantheism (the philosophy that the universe and everything in it is permeated with a Divine Essence which is the life of the Universe), self-negation and devotion to one's mentor, etc. A *Kafi* is a short poem usually of five or six lines, but there are some *kafis* which have more than five lines.

According to Dr. M. Sadiq, "Tasawuf was one of the cardinal forms of thought in Islam during the period (Middle Ages). The modern view is that it is not an integral part of Islam but was gradually absorbed into it on account of its contact with Buddhism, Christianity and Hinduism. Be this as it may, what popularised it as a system of thought was the pervasive gloom and defeatism which followed the destruction of the Abbasids by the Tartar invasion. The devastation and ruin which followed the fall of Baghdad brought home to the Arabs the unreality of wordly splendour and greatness, and the impotence of man . . ." This was the background which influenced the inventors of *kafī*.

Kafis were written primarily for the enlightenment of the rural folks using simple language, easy-to-understand similes

and metaphors, and without loading them unnecessarily with pedantic, mystic or philosophic jargon. That is why *kafis* written by sufi poets several centuries ago are still well understood by a large majority of people living in the rural hinterlands of the Punjab and Sind, who are usually condemned (by the so-called urbane) as churlish and uncultured.

Another peculiar characteristic of this form of poetical expression is that without exception, it is always sung. It is not meant to be read at formal mushairas or other public congregations. Ever since its inception, *kafi* has always been sung by bards and folk singers to the accompaniment of one or more instruments. A few sufi poets set the *kafis* to their own musical compositions which were commonly based on folk-oriented rags such as 'khamach', 'tilak kamod', 'peelo', 'maand', 'pahari', etc., and which used special time measures suiting the temperament of their compositions.

Kafi as a musical genre is often confused with the kafi 'thath', one of our music scales. Of the ten basic scales used for musical formulations in the Sub-Continent, one is named kafi (its third and sixth notes are flat). A plausible explanation for this mix-up in the scale and musical genre is that many kafi compositions of yore were based on this particular scale. Even now some *kafi* melodies are heavily tilted towards this scale.

As a musical form, *kafi* came into existence almost at the same time as its literary shape emerged as a medium of poetical and philosophical expressions. As most kafi compositions are folk-oriented, *kafi*'s large-scale reliance on folk music is understandable. Most of the best-known kafi singers are usually from rural areas who later settle in urban centres when they become affluent enough to afford city lifestyles. But their sphere of influence always extends to the rural hinterlands of the two provinces. The real joy of kafi for a vocalist is to sing it with devotional zeal and mystical ecstasy as long as his spirit moves him. This can sometimes mean hours and hours of singing. Though many kafi singers consciously hold themselves in check, they often fail when

they are in the process of complete "transportation". The audiences in the rural areas, by and large, stay right with them through such marathon singing sessions as they are hypnotised by the poetic merits and profundity of the thoughts of kafis. Musical veneer over these kafis adds poverbial fuel to the fire.

To enjoy a good kafi singer, like Pathaney Khan, Hamid Ali Bela or Shahida Parveen, one needs to cultivate a habit of listening to folk music and also have an in-depth knowledge not only of the Punjabi or Sindhi language (in which the kafi is set), but also of the thought contents and the mystical manifestations of sufi poetry.

Kafi singers should not as a rule be grouped with folk singers, although most of their audiences are rural folks. Like qawwals, they also represent a genre of music which is distinctly independent of the disciplines of other forms of music. Folk singing is relatively easier than kafi singing, which has now assumed classical proportions because they are usually interspersed with 'taans', trills and other ornamentations, usually meant for 'kheyal' or 'thumri' styles of singing.

The greatest known mystic poet who, it is claimed by some, introduced kafi as a literary form was Baba Farid-ud-Din Masud commonly known as Ganj Shakkar. Unfortunately, most of his kaifs have now been lost in historical oblivion, yet there are some which have survived the erosion of time. Another Punjabi sufi poet who wrote a large number of kafis was Shah Hussain, who was born, bred and raised in Lahore. Almost all of his kafis have been preserved and are sung in the Punjab with great fervour, especially at his annual urs — the Mela Chiraghan (festival of lights) — held in Lahore during the last week of March.

But by far the most prolific kafi writer, it is agreed by the scholars and musicologists, was Abdullah Shah alias Bullhe Shah, who was born in a small village at a place now part of the present Bahawalpur Division, but died and was buried in Kasur. In Sind, in addition to several minor saints, three great

sufi poets composed a large number of kafis which also have survived the vicissitudes of history. They were Shahbaz Qalandar, Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai and Sachal Sarmast, People throng their 'mazars' at the time of their annual urs to pay them homage, and enjoy the musical expression of their kafis rendered with great gusto by singers from all over the Punjab and Sind.

Most of these sufi poets had sound knowledge of music and prosody. They held music concerts (disregarding the chagrin caused to the orthodox mullahs) as they all were fond of 'samaa'. They conveyed their message through musical renditions of their kafis.

Man, by nature, accepts things which attract him the most by virtue of their wholesomeness and lasting value. By the same reckoning, best lines of poetry are thought to be the ones which the common rung of the people can remember easily and which are recited by them generation after generation with the same zeal and zest and in the same original tunes. That is because these poetical expressions are shorn of didactics and pedantic verbosity which make them cumbersome and therefore difficult to remember. Kafis are easily understood and, therefore, have far greater appeal than any other form of poetry.

As kafi (as a musical genre) is folk-oriented and as folk music is the source of all musical forms, it is likely to persist for many centuries more. Of course, some inevitable changes in its texture have to occur as an integral part of the evolutionary process.

It is high time that efforts were made to preserve the melodic versions of kafis on a permanent basis. Idara Saqat-e-Pakistan and Institute of Folk Heritage, which is doing a fine job of preserving our rich cultural heritage, one hopes, must be taking due care of this very important aspect of our cultural evolution.

MUSICAL GENRES

Geet: A form with mass appeal

Chronologically speaking, 'geet', which is also known as 'naghma', song and lyric, is the youngest among the musical genres barring pop music. Like several other genres of music, it, too, has been nourished by so many Muslim musicians of the present century that it has strong imprints of their creative genius on its texture. Similarly, Muslim poets and lyricists, too, contributed wholesomely towards its development and maturity.

It owes its origin to the motion pictures whom it continues to serve as a sheet-anchor of its strength. Actually, the advent of talkies created an opening for this new genre of music. Originally used as a device to increase the impact of a given situation in a movie and also to accentuate the emotional effect of melodrams, film music, which is flooded with 'geets', has now become an inseparable part of our silver screen.

In the beginning, film music leaned heavily towards classical traditions and many songs in the earlier films reflected a hangover of the music of Parsi theatre which was classical in nature. A few years later, however, folk traditions of different regions in the South Asian continent began to seep into film music. Films produced by the New Theatres at Calcutta were dominated by folk music of Bengal which was mostly scored by such stalwarts as R.C. Boral, Anil Biswas and S.D. Burman. Almost at the same time, the nascent film industry at Lahore began to emerge on the film map. Music composed for the movies made in Lahore during the late thirties and early forties was preponderatingly folk (of the Punjab brand) and was contributed by such competent musicians as Master Ghulam Haider, G.A. Chishti and Pundit Amar Nath. A synthesis of folk traditions of different regions

of the undivided India and a few light classical forms, however, began to osmose when Bombay became the centre of movie industry of the sub-continent. Top-ranking composers from Calcutta and Lahore shifted to the new centre about the middle of the decade of the forties. 'Geets' which were written (mostly by Muslim lyricists like Akhter Chughtai, Tanvir Naqvi, Majrooh Sultanpuri, Nazim Panipati, Arzoo Lucknawi, Wali Sahib, Sahir Lundhianvi, etc.) and set to music in the Bombay-produced movies clearly pointed towards that successful synthetic experimentation. Commercial gramophone companies located at Lahore, Bombay and Calcutta, too, contributed significantly towards the further development of 'geet' as a distinct genre of music.

With the emergence of radio in the late thirties, the development of 'geet' received further impetus although its taproots for nourishment upto 1947, undoubtedly, remained films particularly, and thereafter generally. With the advent of television in the sixties, 'geet' got an additional shot in its arm as a sizeable portion of all vocal music telecast by this new medium consists of geet's set to music by master musicians.

A 'geet' generally is a short piece of poetry (of three to four stanzas) and is created primarily to reflect different moods as required by different situations in the movies. For example, a 'geet' can be witty, humorous, sarcastic, sardonic, grotesque, melancholic, and a great many other things. Sometimes 'geets' written for films as well as radio and television are marvelous literary pieces but generally their literary merit is not very high. The effectiveness of a 'geet' increases when it is set to tune by a sensitive musician who, in the course of composing, bears in mind the situation for which a particular 'geet' is written. A good composer is supposed to realise the fact that meaningful music demands one's undivided attention. Conversely, a 'geet' can also be a piece of serious music in contradistinction to light or popular music.

'Geet' as a musical genre has three easily discernable

categories: 'raag'-oriented; folk-oriented and pop-oriented. Occasionally, there are other forms which portray a mix of these styles. In the past, there were a number of popular 'geets' which caught the fancies of the masses, cultivated laymen and trained musicians alike notwithstanding their fine subtleties, delicate shadings and intricate formulations. Music, unlike other arts, with the possible exception of dancing, gives pleasure simultaneously on the lowest and highest levels of apprehension. Some of the popular raag-oriented 'geets' were: 'barkha rut bairi hamaar' (Anil Biswas); 'nain se nain milaye rakh mayee ko' (Rashid Atre); 'dil ka diya jalaya' (Khurshid Anwar); 'piya naheen aiye' (Saleem-Iqbal); and 'jhan jhan payal baje' (S.D. Burman). There were others which were composed on the rudiments of 'thumris' and 'dadras' — 'sakhi re naheen aiye sajanwa more' (Master Ghulam Haider) and 'bannwaria na ro' (Master Inayat Hussain). Likewise many 'geets' were based on folk music. Some 'geets' have melodies which were borrowed from liturgical sources. Now-a-days, 'geets' are also set to tunes which are more akin to pop music and for their effectiveness depend more upon the highly sophisticated art of orchestral arrangements brimming with tonal combinations. However, the basis for the popularity of a 'geet' is the amount of work put in by and the concentration of a composer which he uses up in giving melodic rainment to a 'geet'.

This should not, however, minimise the role of a singer who lends his/her voice to a 'geet'. The popularity of a geet to a large measure also depends upon its rendition by a vocalist. It has been observed at times that a good composition by a master musician was completely marred by the poor rendition of a mediocre vocalist and an ordinary composition became very popular because of its fine rendition by a seasoned vocalist. During the past 50 years or so many great vocalists have lent their voices to 'geets' which were composed either for the films, or for radio and television. Prominent among those were: G.M. Durrani, Shamshad Begum,

Amirbai Karnatki, Surriya, Muhammad Tafi, Mukesh, Talaat Mahmood and the doyen of the playback singers Lata Mangeshkar, not to mention her equally able and talented sister Asha Bhonsle in India, Nur Jehan and Zubeda Khanum, Mala, Masud Rana, Salim Raza, Mahnaz, Nayyira Noor, Shahida Parveen and Nahid Akhter, in Pakistan.

As mentioned above, film melodies in the beginning derived their nourishment from theater music which was nothing but a variant of classical music. Music directors for the earlier films, therefore, were those persons who had sound grooming in classical traditions of music. Gradually, however, folk music began to replace classical music in the movies in an amazingly rapid way. Success and popularity of 'geets' in those days depended upon the compositional expertise of R.C. Boral, Anil Biswas and S.D. Berman from Calcutta, and Master Ghulam Haider, G.A. Chishti and Pundit Amir Nath from Lahore. With the geet evolving its own independent form as a musical style at Bombay-based film industry, composers from all over the sub-continent began to converge over there. Those who helped 'geet' in achieving higher place on the popularity scale with their creative genius were Master Ghulam Haider, Rafiq Ghazanvi, Naushad Ali, Khurshid Anwar, Master Inayat Hussain, Feroze Nizami, Anil Biswas, Khem Chand Parkash, S.D. Burman, Pundit Amar Nath, Sajjad Hussain, G.A. Chishti, Rashid Attrey, Saleem-Iqbal and among later generation of composers Shanker Jaikishen, Roshan, Salu Chaudhry. After Independence in 1947, many frontline Bombay-based composers emigrated to Lahore from where they had originally started their music careers. They included such names as Master Ghulam Haider, Khurshid Anwar and Feroze Nizami.

With the ever-increasing number of musical instruments, especially the electronic ones, 'geet' is receiving further tonal colouration which create pleasurable sensation among the listeners. Modern sophisticated orchestral arrangements, undoubtedly, is helping 'geet' in touching responsive chords

among its millions upon millions of fans all over the Sub-Continent.

In Pakistan, radio music has improved a great deal, especially after the creation of the Central Production Unit which acts as a storehouse of newly created music. 'Geets' composed at this Unit by well-known composers became very popular in the recent past.

POP: The Current Fad

It is a fairly recent development, however. During the fifties, when rock music emerged as the most popular form of music in the United States, and when its nuances were beginning to be felt across the Atlantic into Europe, many small groups of singers surfaced in several cities in the countries of Europe and England. The Beatles, who gained immense popularity during the early sixties, was a phenomenon which had its tentacles in the rock music emanating from the United States. Actually, the Beatles of England completely took over the rock music from the point where it was left as a result of the death of Elvis Pressley. Yet, at the same time they were able to maintain their separate entity.

The reverberations of this new brand of music which pervaded all over Western Europe and North America had transcontinental manifestations which triggered off a chain of craze among the youth all over the world. Pakistan could not escape its influences which spread like a jungle fire. After Jazz, pop music is the most popular form of musical expression which has world-wide appeal.

In the South Asian subcontinent, the first to be affected the his new craze was the movie industries at Bombay and Lahore when some music directors started plagiarising Western pop music—especially those composers whose knowledge of our classical music was quite inadequate. Others had to follow suit because in order to remain in business they had to possess the current coin which pop music had become. The indiction of ever-increasing numbers of electronic musical

instruments into the modern orchestras accelerated the pace of pop encroachments in our musical system. There is no denying the fact, however, that tonal colours and modulations resulting from the electrified string band and percussion accompaniment have definite appeal for the average listeners. Moreover, earlier movie hit songs which were pop oriented opened the floodgates of these incursions into our musical ethos and a rat race ensued among the composers to out do others. Music directors who were unable to compose anything original, found in it a God-sent opportunity which they fully availed. Human nature, undoubtedly, wants change and when the music of the radio and films became stale, the newness of the pop music caught the fancy of the listeners in the Sub-Continent.

Pop music, which is in vogue in India and Pakistan, is a combination (like Jazz) of Eastern improvisation, African rhythms and Western polyphonic musical expression, including the inter-changing of the scales. It has more rhythmic appeal than sonic attraction for the listeners, especially for the youngsters who fall an easy prey to the swinging nature of this almost amorous kind of music. A great deal of body play rather than tonal verbal elaboration is the mainstay of this style of music which has become a fad among the youth in our country.

Unvortunately, and driven by their material wants, several young classical singers in Pakistan, are increasingly turning towards pop, not as a matter of conviction but as something which sells. I have discussed this matter with a number of budding Pakistani classical singers who are inclined to change over to this new medium. Invariably all of them admitted that pop music was a passing phase and that it was not going to last long, but they had to switch over to this medium because 'there is more money in it and it is the money that ultimately matters in this highly complex and competitive world of ours'. Agreeing to the effectiveness of classical music they opined that it would ultimately reign supreme although, for the time being, the number of its

votaries might decrease. All kinds of music, including pop, (but excluding folk) derive nourishment from classical music. Therefore, it is imperative that it be kept alive, if not only for its own sake, but also for the nourishment of other forms.

Unquestionably, our classical music is facing a serious crisis these days. The degeneration of the prevalent forms seems to have given birth to the new styles and the emergence of new styles such as pop is undoubtedly a reaction to the decay and senility of our musical expressions. There is a dire need therefore to find ways and means for the regeneration of our musical heritage which is being eroded so rapidly by foreign influences. The incursions made by pop and other Western musical forms in our musical system should be a matter of concern for all the ardent music lovers and for those who wish to maintain the purity and originality of our musical culture intact. It is possible to meet this challenge provided there is a will and a determination to face it squarely. What is needed is a plan based on long-term measures and not ad-hoc steps which have not succeeded in the past in stemming the rot and which will surely fail in the future too. There is a need for innovations, experimentations, research and providing encouragement to the budding musicians so that they can be freed from the pressures of daily wants of life.

Unfortunately, the Music Research Cell which was established by the Government of Pakistan in June 1974:

“to conduct and to sponsor research in all branches of classical music, and to arrange for publication of research materials;

“to re-appraise, by research and investigations, the contribution made by Muslim musicians, both by individuals as well as by schools or ‘gharanas’, to the development of classical music, vocal and instrumental;

“to collect all types of printed material on music i.e., books, manuscripts, articles, magazines, etc., with a view to set up a reference library, and

to obtain photographs or portraits of eminent musicians together with their biographical data, etc., of famous musicians

has done little work. This Cell was pretty active and successful in as much as it succeeded in producing some results. For instance, in collaboration with a local gramophone company, it prepared a "set of 20 LP records of seven famous Muslim 'gharanas' sung by their renowned representatives in their own characteristic style". In addition, it assisted the National Book Foundation in producing a collection of articles on Amir Khusrau which was published during the 700 anniversary celebrations of this sufi-saint. Also, it initiated work on the publication of an Urdu translation of a Hindi book authored by K.G. Brhspati. Later its progress has not kept pace. It is to update and distribute its catalogue of books, articles, magnetic tapes and manuscripts, etc.

Among other things it has to encourage writers researchers to conduct research on all aspects of our musical heritage, as well as to arrange discussion programmes or seminars on music and sponsor lectures and demonstrations to popularise classical music.

The Music Research Cell runs a modest library of books and recorded music and a few dozen photographs.

TEACHING OF CLASSICAL MUSIC

A renowned classical singer, in a recently televised programme broadcast from the Lahore Television Station expressed his desire to head an officially-sponsored music academy where he could impart musical training to every one wishing to learn this delicate but difficult art. What he said actually amounted to suggesting an institutional framework of teaching music like other humanities and sciences. Though seemingly plausible, the idea, when implemented, would prove as unproductive as similar efforts in the past. The Indians, too have experimented on these lines during the past three decades but have failed to accomplish much.

The Pakistan Arts Council, now known as the Alhamra Arts Centre, Lahore, started a programme of musical training during the late fifties with great fervour and fanfare under the supervision of a well-known classical vocalist, composer and musicologist, the late Feroze Nizami. (I was also associated with it for about two years). In 1974, the late Ustad Muhammad Sharif Khan Poonchwalley succeeded the first Principal or Director of the so-called Music Academy. Ustad Chhote Ghulam Ali Khan, another classical vocalist, took charge in 1980. Though some kind of training programme has been going on there for over two decades, and most of the enrolled students had good academic background, this institution has failed to produce even a single vocalist or instrumentalist of any merit or repute. Only a microscopic minority of the enrolled students could develop a feeble sense of appreciation and an ability to differentiate between different classical formulations. Several of them could not acquire even rudimentary knowledge of the art despite years of training. Driven to frustration, most of them developed

strong aversion for classical music ultimately.

The reasons for this sorry state of affairs is not difficult to find. The traditional method of imparting musical training has tenaciously resisted the heavy onslaught of modern techniques and methodologies. Indeed there is no suitable substitute for the 'Ustad-Shagird' (teacher-pupil) relationship and nothing so far has replaced the living presence of the 'Ustad'. The institutional system of teaching and learning does not go too far in promoting the cause of classical music. ties) and the training imparted at universities and colleges can at best, cultivate a taste for listening to music and not the skill for performing.

Practical music is the one subject which requires direct personal teaching. Books, charts, the blackboard, printed notation, even recorded music and the help of modern gadgets such as taperecorders, cassettes, etc. have failed to act as a substitute for an 'ustad', although they can to some extent supplement a student's knowledge of music. Subtle shades and tonal colours, which form the soul of beauty in classical music, can be imparted only by the mouth of the 'Ustad' and grasped only by the devout and musically trained ears of the pupil.

Years ago, I had a chance to watch a well-known vocalist observing his pupil, a young boy, practising his lesson of 'taans' (flights). The young pupil was ruthlessly subjected to an unending repetition of the same melodic phrases so much that he got tired and started gasping. But the Ustad was still shaking his head in a gesture of disapproval saying 'There is no sparkle in your flights yet', and made the young lad practise his seemingly monotonous lesson all over again. This is the way classical music can and should be taught (at a very young age) and it is the vigorous practice of this kind that students at Music Academies and Arts Councils lack today. The impersonal atmosphere at these institutions is not

conducive to the nourishment of budding musicians or the aspiring students.

Great emphasis should therefore be laid on daily practice for long hours with the help of a 'taanpura' (drone instrument) until each note in the words of the late 'Ustad' begins to sparkle. And it is not surprising to note that whereas the facilities for learning music are extensive today — the system of notations, the exposure to different schools of classical singing through radio, TV, gramophone records, and cassettes and VCRs — the actual musical achievements of this age are relatively fewer than in the past.

A synthesis of the conventional and modern methods of teaching may perhaps provide the solution to this problem created by a change in the environment. However, the size of the class should not be allowed to become unmanageable; the essential element of personal instruction so pronounced in the 'teacher-pupil' system should be preserved to as large an extent as possible. In the classroom, students learn as a group and not as individuals, though each student may, within the available time-limit receive some personalised attention. After instruction, the teacher and the taught, unlike those in the 'teacher-pupil' system retire to their respective homes. Yet in the limited scope of time and place, the direct personal method in a small-size class will be possible to a fair extent, and the value of the practical lesson will be in proportion to the direct personal attention of the teacher.

Another very important dimension of the teaching system is the financial incentive to the teacher. The big question is: why should an 'Ustad' feel motivated or even inclined to impart training to someone who is not related to him or who is unable to provide him with adequate financial recompense? Classical music in the South Asian Continent still remains a jealously guarded preserve of a professional community which makes its living only by 'selling' it. Naturally, most of the musicians are unwilling to part with their knowledge unless they are assured of adequate financial returns for

a certain length of time. Hiring an 'Ustad' in an academy on salary basis simply cannot work; considering the number of students enrolled, he will deem the returns proportionately inadequate.

Instruction in musicology or history of music is not substantially different from that in other humanities and sciences. The theory proper in the abstract, particularly the historical portions, can well form the subject-matter of lectures like science or philosophy. Musical jargon can well be explained in easy words with the help of demonstrations and illustrations. Accoustics, the physical basis of music, the phenomena of melody and harmonies, 'vadi' (sonant); 'samvadi' (consonant); and 'vivadi' (dissonant) 'surs' (notes) and beats are excellent topics for exposition capable of being made highly interesting with the aid of audio-visual equipment or appropriate musical instruments.

In the case of other humanities, libraries and laboratories are essential. In practical music, the library should comprise collection of good recorded music, well-authored books and other literature on music.

EVOLUTION OF FOLK MUSIC

From time immemorial people had a craving for expression and for conveying their feelings and thoughts to their fellow human beings. They derived special pleasure from narrating stories and inventing other ways of expression, including singing of songs. Much before the invention of the printing machine, people used to make up tales and tunes. Their listeners enjoyed, and sometimes tried to learn these by heart, so that they could be passed on to posterity.

As these tales and songs were repeated by different people at different times, some deliberate, some unintentional changes slowly and gradually crept into their texture, thereby making them sound a little better and somewhat different to the new audiences. The new listeners also went away looking for admirers with whom to share these 'new songs', and they in turn tried to improve them further. This transfiguration continues unabated even now.

As a result of this process of transformation and improvement while passing from one generation to another, the first singer or story-teller, who had invented these songs or stories originally, was completely lost in oblivion. It can therefore be said that none of these songs and stories was the creation of any one mind. All the people of the community from which these stories and songs emanated had contributed wholesomely towards their growth and refinement. These tales, songs and sayings were known as the lore of the folk or, more commonly, as folklore.

Knowledge of the history and development of folk music is largely conjectural. Descriptions of folk music culture are "occasionally encountered in historical records, but such records do not show so much the history of folk music as the history of ideas held by the literate classes about folk

music".¹ It is assumed that throughout history, literate societies have possessed musical culture different from those of their unlettered contemporaries. Their reaction to folk music generally was one of indifference and occasionally, derision, hostility and even disdain.

The predominant characteristic of folk music is "its dependence on acceptance by a community — that is, by a village, ethnic group or family".² Its proclivity to change as it is passed from one person to another is an additional strong feature of this traditional, typically anonymous art of the people. A folk song thus is the property of the entire community.

Contrary to earlier beliefs, "folk songs are normally created not by groups of people but by individuals. When it is first created, each song is the work of one person, though it is recreated constantly by the performers who learn and sing it".³ A modern composer may create new songs by drawing together lines, phrases, and musical motifs for extant songs, possibly combined with entirely new ones. This technique has extensively been used by those who pioneered film music in the sub-Continent during the second quarter of the present century.

As is aptly observed, music transcends political, geographical, religious, cultural and ethnic boundries. As a direct consequence of this trans-national tendency of music, frequent interchange of tunes between neighbouring countries takes place where people of the same ethnic origin and stock are living. In South Asia, it is particularly true of the inhabitants of Afghanistan, Pakistan, India and Bangladesh. Similar situations also exist among several South European countries. Each country, however, tends to have a repertoire of its own, with stylistic features as well as tunes that are not shared with neighbours. Textual types are more widely distributed than tune types. Folk traditions in many areas have suffered decline in the present century, particularly in those which became heavily urbanised, industrialised and culturally more refined and intellectually sophisticated.

Much folk music can be said to be functional inasmuch as "it is not primarily entertainment or of aesthetic interest but is associated with other activities as an accompaniment particularly ritual, work, agriculture, and dance".⁴ In a traditional rural society, such as Pakistan, music is a necessity in almost all rituals and festivals. The words of folk songs can serve as a chronological record of events and as an agent of enculturation. In modern industrial societies, where it is thought to promote self-esteem, self-preservation and social solidarity, such functions of folk music have been used by organisations advocating social change.

Folk music is usually transmitted by word of mouth, or by oral tradition. This means that "a folk song can change as a result of the creativity of those who perform it or of their particular musical style or of their faulty memory. As it is handed down from generation to generation,, a folk song develops additional forms, called variants, which may differ markedly from each other.....Folk tunes also change when they cross ethnic or cultural boundaries"⁵ A Pakistani Punjabi variant, for example, may exhibit characteristics of Pakistan folk music while its variant in the Indian Punjab, although recognisable and related, will assume the stylistic traits of the folk music of the region. The degree to which songs change varies from culture to culture.

There is very little difference among the compositions of folk music, popular music and classical music. The relationships among the sections of folk songs and their scales and rhythms are, also found in other music of the same culture. Systematic improvisation as a method of composition is found only occasionally, as in epic songs. It is often difficult to ascertain whether the same composer created both the words and music in a folk song, but, in many, they are known to come from different sources.

Ballads, generally short narrative songs with repeated lines, epics (longer narratives in heroic style), work songs, love and other lyrical songs, songs of a ceremonial nature, or the annual agricultural fair, and lullabies are some of the

most important genres of folk music.

Other types of music, such as popular or classical, have phylogenetic relationship with folk music and the differences between these cannot be definitely or strictly stated, define or fixed. Typically, folk music lives in oral tradition and it is learned thorough hearing rather than formal studying. Primarily rural in origin, it exists in cultures in which there is also an urban, technically more sophisticated musical tradition. Whereas classical music is essentially the art of a small social, economic or intellectual urban elite, folk music is understood by almost all segments of the society. On the other hand, that widely accepted type of music usually called 'popular' depends mainly on the mass media — records, radio and television — for extensive permeation, while folk music distinctively is disseminated within families and restricted social networks. But the introduction of songs from folklore into the mass media blurs the distinction. Moreover, while folk music as defined above exists in all cultures in which there is also a cultivated musical tradition, the usefulness of the concept varies from culture to culture.

Folk music came to be respected as a spontaneous creation of the peoples "unencumbered by artistic self-consciousness and aesthetic theories and as an embodiment of the common experience of inhabitants of the locals".⁶ These distinguishing characteristics make folk music productive and fertilising for art (classical) music, particularly when it is intended to express the nuances of a culturally distinctive ethnic group. According to another theory, "folk music is not created by the folk but is a combination of popular music and art (classical) music that has 'trickled down' to the folk and undergone various transformations (usually debasements) through oral tradition".⁷ A viewpoint which is intermediate between these two positions has gained widespread acceptance just recently. "Folk Music" it explains "is seen neither as merely debased art (classical) music nor as an essential component of it. Rather, it is seen to have symbolic relationship to other music in the larger

society of which the folk community forms a part".⁸ In the highly-developed countries of the West, the give-and-take between folk music and classical music is well documented. Many folk songs collected in oral tradition have been traced to literary sources, often of considerable antiquity.

1-8 Encyclopaedia Americana, 1976

MUSIC OF THE SOUTH ASIAN CONTINENT
AND WESTERN COUNTRIES

Many a votary of the South Asian classical music has been ardently pressing the perennial claim that their system of music is superior to all others, especially the Western. Equally vociferous are the practitioners of Western music (and its staff notation) in asserting that their music is a highly scientific, technically advanced system of melodic expression, and, therefore enjoys the highest position among other systems of music in the world. Arguments on both sides are pungent but inconclusive.

Before we enumerate the main differences between the two systems, however, it will be in order to quote the following definitional explanation of music.

“Music is classed as a fine art but it is the most difficult and scientific of its kind. It is the most difficult because it has to produce its effects through transient auditory impulses only and not, as is the case with sculpting or painting, through visual impulses which, besides being delineable in line and colour, are also available for assimilation through prolonged observation. It is the most scientific, because it is hooped in the steel frame of accurate time and tone sense perceptions, which form the warp and woof of all the countless patterns created by the constructive imagination of the artistes”¹

While attempting a comparison, the existing similarities between the western and sub-continental systems which parts make them attractive to the followers of both, must be brought out. These are:

1. In both the systems, pitch, timbre and intensity are the hallmarks (imperatives) of a music note.
2. Basic scales in both the systems are made up of eight notes. The first note is known as tonic (sur), the next

six are at suitable music intervals mutually or reciprocally related to each other strictly in conformity with the laws of consonance, and the eight is tonic again but with double the number of its vibrations per second. This grouping of musical notes is called an octave (after the total number of notes) in the western system, while in the sub-continental parlance it is designated as a 'saptak' (because in between these notes there are seven music intervals; and because the tonic and its double are considered one note).

- 3 Music interval between any two different notes of the scale is calculated in both the systems as if the two were in the same octave (saptak) although from the point of view of intensity, these may actually be in different ones.
- 4 Both the systems agree on the range of human voice (used in production and manipulation of music notes) which is ranged in three octaves (saptaks).
- 5 When music is rendered to the accompaniment of rhythmic time, it is measure in bars of specific length in both the systems. This length is composed of basic time units — 'matra' (pulse beat) of structural time. The rhythm is accentuated by 'bharri' (stresses) and 'khalis' (waivies) at suitable intervals within each bar.

Basic dissimilarities in both the systems are explained below:

1. Melody is the sine quo non of sub-continental music (wherein a combined use of notes is disallowed). Western music, on the other hand, is based on harmony wherein use of chords and counterpoints is not only permissible but also required.
2. In western music, minor, chromatic and enharmonic scales are used in addition to the diatonic scales of music notes. In the sub-continental system, only diatonic scale of music notes is used. (The basic scale presently in vogue in our system resembles the C

Major scale of the western system but with a slight difference in the fifth and sixth intervals).

3. In the western system, intervals are generally equally tempered while in the sub-continental system they are not so.
4. The notes Sa (C) and Pa (G), in our system, are fixed and immutable, and Ma (F) can only have a sharp variant. In the western system, all the notes of the basic scales can be subjected to modification.
5. When played to 'time', tempo robato (playing independently of the time beat percussions) is the rule rather than an exception in the sub-continental system. Besides, the 'sum' (crescendo) is on the first beat of the 'tal' (bar), whereas in the Western system it is on the last beat.
6. The sub-continental system of music gives complete freedom to a musician to choose a scale which suits his range of voice by selecting as a tonic any one of the permissible notes. In the western system, a musician is generally restricted to conform to pre-determined keys.
7. Another glaring difference between the two systems is the emphasis in the sub-continental system on a style of vocalisation known as 'alap' (slow progression and elaboration of musical notes) in which music emerges in its purity, free from the bonds of rhythmic structural time. However, all the known rules about the delineation, development and thematic elaboration of a raga are strictly observed and followed in this process.

It is thus clear that so far as the fundamental essentials of tone and time conceptions are concerned both the systems are pegged on similar footings. The points of difference however emerge in consonance with the cultural aspirations and ideals of the peoples of the areas where each prevails. It will not be easy therefore to pass judgement on the claims of superiority of one system over the other, but it can be

safely said that each system has its strong points which stand equally to reason and aesthetics.

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1. R.L. Batra; "Science and Art of Indian Music"

MUSICAL FESTIVALS AND ANNIVERSARIES

Once in a while one hears about a musical get-together arranged either in the provincial metropolis or at another town to celebrate some kind of musical festival or to observe the death anniversary of a well-known classical vocalist or instrumentalist where elaborate musical activities are arranged.

During yesteryears, much prior publicity used to precede such observances, which were arranged at a somewhat larger scale. But now they take place in a more or less quiet fashion. Only a few, like the one in memory of the late Ustad Fateh Ali Khan Jullundri Qawwal held in April each year at Faisalabad, and Ustad Bhai Lal Muhammad also held in April at Lahore, find some mention in newspapers.

The importance of musical festivals and anniversary celebrations can hardly be emphasised. They have a role in the present awakening of interest in music, howsoever slow the process may be. Therefore, all the agencies and organisations such as radio, t.v. and the arts councils, which claim to act as agents of cultural integration, should chip in and cooperate in arranging such celebrations. And those with increasing popularity, like the ones at Faisalabad and Lahore, should be turned into permanent institutions and made regular features of our cultural scene.

Besides creating interest in music, such anniversary celebrations, musical festivals and music conferences supplement the rather poor knowledge of the people about music and musicians, and afford them opportunities to enjoy free good quality music, which is the hallmark of such celebrations. Without good background knowledge, a large number of people are unable to enjoy music fully. The organisers of these musical events are, therefore, advised also

to arrange at these occasions, lectures by enlightened and capable musicians who can articulate their talks on the history, evolution and theory of sub-continental music and on the Muslim contributions for its perfection. This will help protect our rich heritage from gradual extinction. Literature on music, too, should be published and distributed among the music lovers for their benefits and enlightenment. By and large, people do want to know about music and they express their curiosity on these occasions. But they need the help of those who profess to work for the promotion of music and clamour for it to be seen as an essential part of our social equipment. Quite often, many a music lover has become frustrated because of the acute shortage of printed material.

As the intellectual range and capacity of our musicians are generally limited because of a lack of formal education, it is the responsibility of the few educated musicians (Khurshid Anwar, Mian Shaharyar, Sohail Ra'ana, and others) and the musicologists to create informative and intelligible reading material on and about classical music. The Ministry of Culture, Government of Pakistan, through Idara-e-Saqafat Pakistan or National Council of the Arts, and the Provincial Arts Councils, should subsidise publication of such literature and channelise its sale properly. A step much better with a purposeful cooperation between educated musicians, arts councils, and Government departments charged with the preservation and promotion of Pakistan culture (which includes classical music also) is necessary.

Considering the eclipse from which our classical music has suffered during the last century and a half, and the almost utter penury to which our classical musicians have been reduced and the social disrespect to which they have been subjected, anniversary celebrations are a step in the right direction. What is needed so urgently is sustained and systematic efforts, not ad-hoc measures. The organisers should make concerted efforts to make educated persons understand that music is as respectable as any other art and should not be stigmatised as an evil as has hitherto been the

case. In the past, people were made to consider music immoral simply because it could be and had been used for all sorts of purposes. But just as pornographic expressions made through the medium of a particular language do not ipso facto make that language had so some erotic compositions and formulations should not be held against music. Music is a language, as generally agreed — a language capable of expressing emotions — and can be put to wrong use like any other language. It entirely depends upon the thinking and motivation of its practitioner.

Through music the soul learns harmony and rhythm, and even a disposition for justice, for in the words of Plato “can he who is harmoniously constituted ever be unjust? ...Music moulds character and, therefore, shares in determining social and political issues . Music is valuable not only because it refines feelings and character, but also because it preserves and restores health. There are some diseases which can be treated only through the mind. The unconscious sources of human thought are touched and soothed by music.

General thinking in Pakistan tends to consider music unnecessary for society. Such hostility towards music sometimes leads to unfortunate incidents in our social set-up. A recent incident at Pattoki, where some musicians were alleged to have been paraded through streets with their faces blackened, is a case in point. Therefore, besides removing misconceptions about music, a large number of enlightened and knowledgeable listeners (a kind of lobby for voicing feelings) should be groomed who could appreciate classical music in all its intricacies and subtleties. Favourable climate thus created is bound to lead to the emergence of good musicians.

‘Kheyal’ is the most popular form of our classical expression. Fortunately, we still have plenty of good exponents of this genre of music who have an abiding interest in the popularisation of this art. The names and fames of these gifted men can and should be exploited in restoring to music once again its distinguished place in society.

EVOLUTION OF 'GHARANAS'

'Gharanas' of music which are endeared and revered by every musician have obviously been the victim of long and pathetic indifference at the hands of musicologists and writers on music. Rarely would one come across in Pakistan a discourse or an essay which would threadbare the evolution and various other aspects of this institution which has so profoundly contributed to the development of traditions of classical music during the past three centuries in this part of the world.

What are these 'gharanas' and who founded them? Can their histories and origins be traced in a systematic and academic way? Do these 'gharanas' have any special aesthetic principles for the treatment of classical formulation? Is their existence essential for the continued development or even survival of classical music? Do they really set traditions and represent different schools or styles of vocalisation? Why have the 'gharanas' emerged among the practitioners of classical music and not among exponents of other lighter forms of music such as 'thumri', 'dadra' and 'ghazal'? And finally why all the 'gharanas' were founded by the Muslims?

These are the questions which often agitate the minds of cultivated laymen, connoisseurs and even musicians. Several explanations, often mutually exclusive, are offered by the musicians who are generally unable to articulate them because of a lack of proper education and their inability to check the veracity of their own statements.

V.H. Deshpande, a noted Indian musicologist, has made the following succinct observation about the 'gharana' system:

"The concept of 'gharana' is a riddle to many lovers of music. In literature there are no 'gharanas'. There are in

painting or in sculpture schools or groups of artists inspired by a common tradition or influenced by a common style. 'Gharanas', however, are not schools. 'Gharanas' are more sectarian in their attitude and on the whole more akin to families or blood relations because of the rather marked family pride that they exhibit".¹

This seems to be a fair, reasonable and an appropriate definition of 'gharanas'.

The emergence of 'gharana' system in the sub-continent had its osmosis in the 'teacher-pupil' pattern of relationship which has been and continues to be the hallmark of musical tradition and which provided nourishment to the personalities and characters of future generations of musicians. The main feature of this highly-personalised system is that a musician takes upon himself the onerous responsibility of training one student at one time, who is either his son or a very close relative. This is how a basis for providing continuity to the classical tradition was evolved. How this teaching methodology took root in our music system can perhaps be explained by the following factors:

There are no two opinions about the fact that the basic raw material for nurturing musical art is the human voice and its medium is the 'sur' (tone), which should be differentiated from the normal human speaking voice. The teacher or the 'ustad', in addition to imparting musical knowledge, assists in the culturing of a disciple's voice with meticulous care and unwavering patience. This long process, which in musical parlance, is called 'talim' (training) goes on for many years until the teacher is completely satisfied that his pupil's voice has developed the capability of manipulating musical notes and their intricate formulations with ease and perfection. This method of training and grooming the budding youngsters, which is so central to the transfer of musical expertise from one generation to another, serves as the infrastructure for the 'gharana' system.

Other social, economic, historical and psychological factors too have contributed significantly to the nurturing of

these 'gharanas'. During the heydays of the Mughal Empire, the musicians enjoyed an unlimited amount of patronage from the emperors and the chiefs of various principalities on whose munificence the practitioners of this art thrived. The Courts offered them lucrative jobs with concomitant high respect, giving the musicians higher status in social hierarchy and affording them ample opportunities to win occasional favours from the monarchs or their tributaries. Such favourable treatment inspired the musicians to work hard in order to maintain a certain level of their performance and sharpen their skill which facilitated the transfer of the invaluable art traditions to their scions.

Additionally and surreptitiously these favours caused a kind of undeclared and perpetual contest among the musicians to excel each other in their performances in order to win a position of closer proximity to the kings and provincial rulers. Naturally this generated a spirit of competition among the musicians who always responded positively to such nuances. Consequently, music began to be treated as an exclusive and jealously guarded preserve of a class or clan of musicians who were attached with various courts all over the sub-continent. Future generations of musicians maintained and perpetuated that competitive spirit, which ultimately provided solid foundations for the 'gharana' system.

Later with the decline of the Mughal Empire and the consequent disorder, many court musicians, afraid of the anarchical conditions at the main seats of power, left for smaller places where they found more congenial and peaceful conditions to pursue their artistic work. This uneasiness among the musicians further accentuated their urge to restrict this art within the confines of their own family bounds. Some of the known centres of development of the 'gharana' system were the princely states of Gwalior, Jaipur, Indore, Rampur, Patiala, Hyderabad and bastions of aristocratic power like Agra and Kirana (in the UP); Delhi; and Talwandi (in the Punjab), where most of the musicians had taken refuge after the disintegration of the Muslim political

power in India.

A slight digression may not be inappropriate at this stage. As most of the court musicians during the Muslim rule in India were followers of the Islamic faith, all the 'gharana' were founded by those Muslim musicians. Even when they were under the patronage of Hindu princes or rajas, they continued to flourish and carried the flags of their family traditions forward without any let or hindrance. The existing 'gharanas' on whose authority the veracity of classical musical formations are checked even now, have always been and continue to remain Muslim. During the past few centuries even if a non-Muslim musician or two managed to emerge, they too were directly or indirectly the beneficiaries or disciples of one Muslim 'gharana' or another. Despite some half-hearted claims by a handful of Indian musicologists that Hindu musicians also headed a 'gharana' or two, the fact remains that all the 'gharanas' of music were founded by and continued to remain under the tutelage of Muslim musicians all over the sub-continent.

At the turn of the present century there was a great spurt of musical activities among the Marhattas in India. The great revivalist V.N. Bhatkhande, who published a number of books on music, was a pupil of Rampur 'gharana' of Muslim musicians. Being a rich person (he was a prominent lawyer at Bombay High Court) he could afford to engage best musicians of that time from whom he received musical training. After his death, however, some voices were heard in India claiming that he had also founded a distinct 'gharana' of his own. This was pure fabrication as it was not based on facts.

The development and perfection of classical music undoubtedly stems from the evolution of 'gharanas'. Although the basis of the sub-continental music is definitely not the Vedas, one occasionally hears disagreeing voices emanating from across the borders repeating the age-old and hackneyed arguments that classical music originated from the Vedas and was therefore Hindu in nature. Vedic music was a fact at one time in history but it has so completely

been revolutionised by the Muslims that no traces of the original basis of ancient music can be found now.

Each 'gharana' was a kind of dynasty which left indelible marks on the musical map of undivided India. Or it may be likened to a modern university where student musicians were not only trained but also were watched and supervised almost round the clock by their dedicated and highly motivated teachers. It was unquestionably the results of such rigorous training that these 'universities' produced musicians of such great fame and calibre as Abdul Karim Khan and Abdul Wahid Khan (Kirana), 'General' Fateh Ali Khan and Bade Ghulam Ali Khan (Patiala), Amir Khan (Indore), Alladiya Khan and Bhoorji Jhan (Jaipur), Rahimat Khan and Nisar Hussain Khan (Gowaliar), Fayyaz Khan (Agra) and Mian Mehr Baksh (Talwandi). The names within parenthesis are of the major 'gharanas' of music.

Each 'gharana' can be distinguished by its own peculiar method of delineation of ragas and distinct presentational discipline. From the sounding of the first note to the closing of a particular 'bandish' (composition) these methods and disciplines are scrupulously maintained by its adherents.

Different ways of voice production also separate one 'gharana' from another. This is in addition to the glaring difference in the styles of vocalisation. According to one belief, particular methods of voice culturing and perfecting styles of singing are intrinsically connected with each other in the sense that any particular style of singing would be an extremely uphill task unless it is presented in its corresponding style of voice production.

There are certain imperatives for the continued existence of these 'gharanas'. Among them are an unbroken chain of at least three generations of practising musicians and the innovations of styles of singing introduced by each generation in addition to mastering the original style of the gharanas.

1. V.H. Deshpande in "Indian Musical Traditions"

MY THANKS are due to Syed Ghulam Sarwar, Magazine Editor, the Pakistan Times, Lahore, who is a critic as thorough as he is uncompromising, for his help in getting the process of writing this volume started. His painstaking examination of the scripts of all the articles which were published in the Pakistan Times originally, and his firm refusal to relax critical standards have left their mark on the book throughout.

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Lahore,
October, 1982

M.S.M.

THE MUSICAL HERITAGE OF PAKISTAN

In this book Saeed Malik has discussed the evolution of music in the south Asian sub-continent.

He has enumerated and very well, too, the contribution made by the Muslim musicologists, scholars and musicians, during the past 800 years or so.

The thrust of the series of articles, earlier published in newspapers and now collected and published by Idara Saqafat-e-Pakistan in a slender volume, is that classical music, as it exists today, is absolutely different from the one which was in vogue during the pre-Islamic times. In fact Muslim musicians helped in the emergence and development of various forms of musical expression.